NARRATIVE PEDAGOGY WITH KOREAN CHRISTIAN WOMEN:

A PEDAGOGY OF EMPOWERMENT AGENCY

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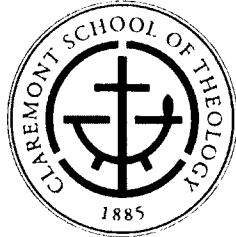
Doctor of Philosophy

by

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ABSTRACT

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This study seeks to document and explore the claim that narrative pedagogy, adopted for Korean Christian women active in the Korean Protestant churches, can be effective in empowering their voices and self-agency in ways that are consistent with piercing feminist theological lens, bringing positive transformation and diversity to communities of faith that are unwilling to accept relational truths. By listening to and analyzing women's stories, one can unpack the patriarchal messages and ensuing gendered cultures that have rendered women to be underrepresented in leadership and moreover, suffer as a faceless, voiceless, and oppressed group within congregations.

Herein, this study aims to facilitate women to participate in the process of deconstructing their dangerous memories and stereotypes of women, and reconstructing their "dangerous" memories of protest, resistance, difference, inclusivity, diversity, resilience, and dignity. This study also proposes narrative pedagogy as an appropriate and effective empowerment for nurturing the "narrative self," who enables women to overcome the drag of hopeless passivity and channel their frustration into a determination to find a better way, without subjecting them to further under-representation and inferiority of patriarchy in their religious communities.

As an interdisciplinary study, narrative inquiry is chosen to capture and analyze the stories of life experiences and lived voices of Korean Christian women active in congregations, and gain generative themes for their context.

This study will help Christian religious educators grasp and understand the lived voices, stories, and contexts of research subjects and thus find any better way to work with Korean female Christians. Eleven Korean Christian women were interviewed as the research partners. The field data gained by in-depth interview is discussed and analyzed through a feminist theological lens. The group of eleven women is homogenous with educational background and class, so it can be a benefit to Christian religious educators who want to know the need of Christian women, implying that the result would have been different if the research partners with different characteristics were recruited.

ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

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Chapter One

Introduction

This dissertation proves that narrative pedagogy adopted for Korean Christian women active in the Korean Protestant churches can be effective in empowering their voices and self-agency in ways that are consistent with piercing feminist theological lens and thus can bring gender-inclusive transformation and diversity to their communities of faith that might not welcome women as equal partners of men in the service of God and humanity. This introductory section outlines the motivation, the context, the aims, the natures and limitations, the audience, and overview.

Motivation

This study emerges out of interdisciplinary interests in narrative pedagogy of empowerment agency of Korean Christian women, and my own experience and commitment as a Christian woman in Korean Christian congregations. I grew up in a Christian family who attends a conservative church, which is prevalent in Korea. My pastors addressed church members not to spend money on Sundays and young people to go to a seminary to be an ordained pastor to save the sinners from the sin-filled world regardless of their gifts and dreams during my teen years. However, they told a different story to young girls. Their message was that it is the best happiness for women to marry a good man; if you wanted go to a seminar, be a wife of a pastor to support and assist him. I hadn't heard that girls could grow up feeling free and equal to boys and fulfill their potentials as human beings and gain real access to leadership positions in their societies.

My encounters with feminist resources were helpful to find the patriarchy grip on women inside and outside of Korean context that has been defined by male domination and women's subordination. When I worked for churches, I experienced that the real concerns and the extensive gender inequality which women face from birth have been neglected and their service to God and their congregations have rarely been properly recognized in the church even though they have contributed in many ways to the speedy growth of Korean Protestant churches.

To my memory, I was a happy, cheerful, and energetic girl until I got married to a senior pastor in a mainline Protestant church in Korea. I am not talking about my marriage life but church life. I was expected to be a wife of a minister who only supports him as an almost voiceless, nameless, and faceless entity. When I was asked to give a talk on women's rights and movement in Korean context to the seminary students after starting living as a wife of a minister, I found myself lacking confidence in speaking in public and feeling too much nervous before speaking although preaching, speaking, and teaching were what I had done. Above all, I found myself too much depending upon my marital connection to my husband. From then to now, what it means to live a woman in patriarchal culture have been in the very centre of many questions, which I need to answer.

The pervasiveness of patriarchy results in the systematic exclusion and erasure of Korean Christian women: women are commonly excluded from leadership positions at churches. For example, there is no female bishop in Korean Christianity since the introduction of Christianity some 200 years ago; women tend to have fewer opportunities than men to take up ministerial positions in churches and teaching positions at

seminaries; men also hold many religious organizations. Inn Sook Lee summarizes the reality of Korean Christian women:

> "Presbyterian, Korea's largest Protestant denominational group, did not ordain women until 1995. Although women are now ordained, not many congregations welcome women to positions of leadership. These attempts to silence the contributions of women are attempts to silence the *imago deo*, the image of God, in all women."[1]

Patriarchal messages directed by Confucian notions of gender hierarchy internalize male domination with female submission, instructing Korean Christian women to accept their inferior status and adjust to their "Korean-Christian social environment."[2] Thus, Korean women are subject to all of the nameless, faceless, and powerless diseases, seeing that many married Korean women still are called only someone's mother or someone's wife, rather than their own name. Likewise, they are being still confined to private realm regardless of their desires, and gifts, while men occupy the public sphere. The greater part of their talking is about their husband and children rather than themselves, and much of their joy comes from their children and husband. In the patriarchal context that asks women to keep silence of women let alone their self-assertion, many married middle-aged women suffer from Korean culture-bound syndrome, *hwa-byung* in Korean, as psychosomatic and physical manifestations of suppressed anger or rage.[3] Decisively, high levels of education, economic and democratic advancement of Korean society, and the

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[1] Inn Sook Lee, *Passage to the Real Self: The Development of Self-Integration for Asian American Women* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2009), 32.

[2] Ai Ra Kim, *Women Struggling for a New Life* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 91.

[3] Wen-Shing Tseng, *Handbook of Cultural Psychiatry* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 2001), 253.

quick growth of Christianity have hardly ever provided women with an impulse toward

emancipation from the family and contributed to transforming the gender stereotypes full

of the society.

Last but not least, the concept of 'dangerous memories or subversive knowledge,

as introduced by Sharon Welch, can be used as a critical means to critique the parallels of

Korean female Christians' self-agency and subjectivity. The dangerous memories imply

not only the oppressed peoples' stories of suffering, conflict, and exclusion but also of

resistance, struggle, hope for freedom, and dignity.[4] The report that Korea women 's

gender equality is ranked as 108th of 135 countries around the world[5] proves that self-

agency of Korean women is one of the major issues to be reviewed and addressed. In this

context, Korean Christian women had opportunities to encounter the stories of

emancipation or freedom in Christ-"neither male nor female, neither slave nor free (Gal

3:28)"-but they were exposed to the texts that command women to submit their husbands

and remain silence in their religious communities.

Herein, the assumption that human beings are *homo narrans* or storytelling

persons can be suggested as a spirit to empower women to break their silence and

overcome their underrepresentation in the congregations where a few male pastors

always are supposed to speak while the majority of women are asked to remain silence.

Consequently, this dissertation explores how narrative pedagogy can be a means to foster

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[4] Sharon D. Welch, *A Feminist Ethic of Risk*, revised ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 104.

[5] Sungsook Moon, "The Production and Subversion of Hegemonic Masculinity: Reconfiguring Gender Hierarchy in Contemporary South Korea," in *Under Construction: The Gendering of Modernity, Class, and Consumption in the Republic of Korea*, ed. Laurel Kendall (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 80.

Korean Christian women to enjoy their full dignity, realign their sense of self-identity,

and develop self-agency as daughters of God through the lens of feminist theology.

Context

This study is to explore how narrative religious education empowers women in

Korean congregations to develop their emancipatory identity given by Jesus Christ and

bring gender-inclusive transformation to their congregations. Working with the Christian

women in Korean congregation that I chose as the participants of my research, I wanted

to know their experience in their religious, social, and cultural context in which they live

and that affect their experience. In a word, what it does mean to live as a Korean

Christian woman in the Korean social and religious context how Christianity has affected

Korean Christian females in terms of shaping their self-identity and self-development

will be elaborated.

Chung Hyun Kyung points out the fact that the Korean oppressed women are the

minjung of the *minjung* - the people, grassroots, or the masses - of the *minjung* and their

experience as the *han* of the *han* - the feeling of unresolved bitterness - in the Korean

society.[6] In that gender discrimination against women causes harsher oppression and

more pain for Korean women than Korean men, they are called the *minjung* of the

minjung and women's *han* must be distinguished from the general *minjung*'s *han*.[7] Being

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[6] Hyun Kyung Chung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), 23.

[7] Andrew Sung Park, *The Wounded Heart of God: The Asian Concept of Han and the Christian Doctrine of Sin* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 15. There is no better point of reference than in the concept of *han* explained by poet Chi-ha Kim. According to him, *han* refers to "the *minjung*'s anger and sad sentiment turned inward, hardened and stuck to their hearts. *Han* is caused when one's outgoingness is blocked and suppressed for an extended period of time by external oppression and exploitation."

asked to be modest daughters, wise wives, and sacrificing mothers whose images are nameless, faceless, and selfless, and to remain silent on a daily basis is related to patriarchal context.

Patriarchy is the word used to describe the system that makes systematic control and subjugation of women by men possible. This is pervasive across almost every sphere of life and boils down particularly to women's underrepresentation in key sectors such as decision-making positions, and leadership. Confucianism is also linked to patriarchal system in Korean context. It was the dominant social and moral philosophy in China but is not as influential to Chinese people. Nonetheless, I was curious to know why the legacy of Confucianism lingers especially on Korean people, passing down and perpetuating androcentric messages and practices resulting in women's subordination and obligation to men.

What allows Confucianism to still control Korean thought, culture, and life style, and who wants to maintain these ethical codes in this country? In fact, Confucianism is a set of ethical teachings on this world. It is composed of five moral imperatives: "righteousness between ruler and subject, affinity between father and son, affinity, separation of functions between husband and wife, proper respect between elder and younger, fidelity among friends."[8] Among these mores, the filial piety is one of its core concepts. It calls for children or people to serve and obey their parents and ancestors. It also is related to institutionalized ancestor worship, reinforcing the paradigm of the male lineage-father-husband, and son. The problem is that Confucianism developed based on

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[8] Young-Key Kim-Renaud, "Introduction," in *Creative Women of Korea: The Fifteenth through the Twentieth Centuries*, ed. Young-Key Kim-Renaud (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2004), 6.

patriarchal practices as if it was a religion, passing the principles in which males shall dominate females to each family and society. The patrilineal or patriarchal power that prioritizes' the father or fatherly line of ancestors and hierarchical structures causes many kinds of gender inequality; pushes women to the peripheral place, preserving and reinforcing women's loss of self and voicelessness; violates women's rights and dignity; confines women to the kitchen and housework by ignoring their choice and will; it internalizes its core messages that women are inferior to men. The care-giving role for the physical needs of their families falls primarily to women, fossilizing Korean women's diseases with no name, invisibility, and trivialization prevalent in Korean context when there is none to provide assistance.

Korean Christian women live in the multi-religious context with a rich cultural heritage. Nonetheless, it has been noted that Korea's most impressive success stories for Christianity today is not a common case in other countries in East Asia, displaying drastic contrast with those in China and Japan where Christianity continues to be a small minority. When Western missionaries entered Korea over 200 years ago, they tried to plant the evangelical seeds via educational, social, and medical services. Their strategy was to concentrate on the conversion of the lower classes, especially focusing on women and girls and encouraging Christianity to be the religion of the lower classed rather than the elite groups.

Remarkably, Christian missionaries built a school for women and taught them how to read and write. It was a revolution to women in the Confucian society where women were not allowed to attend schools. That is why many Korean Christians believe that Christian values have had positive effects on various social relationships and

particularly the gendered structure under the Confucian principles. They experienced

Christianity that has played a pivotal role in their building emancipatory identity as the

children of God beyond andocentric principles embedded in culture but, on the other

hand in maintaining and reinforcing the stereotype on women and sacrificial ideology by

openly and insidiously mixing with patriarchal ideology in their culture and tradition.

One cannot separate being a Korean, being a woman, and being a Christian

because being a Korean Christian women entail all three characteristics. Therefore,

Korean Christian need to reflect whether church growth, peace, and harmony are still

maintained at the cost of women; whether many conservative communities of faith think

still women's participation in leadership position for their communities and women's

emancipation given by Jesus in as obstacles to church growth; whether Korean

communities of faith are willing to contribute to transforming the dangerous memories of

gendered practice into the dangerous memories of equality, justice, and healing.

Aims

The main purpose of my study is to examine the level of Christian women's self-

agency and find how their stories based on their experience bring about their spiritual

development that enhances substantial decision-making capacities and roles in their life

and their healthy relationships with God, communities of faith, themselves, and others.

To deal with the both major issues, I have reviewed literatures produced by feminist

theological and religious education academics, and simultaneously listened to the lived

stories of some Korean Christian women that are the integral part for the quest for their

self-agency in congregations.

In detail, this study has two three aims: first, to examine the women's status in Korean society and congregations, second, to evaluate the potential of narrative pedagogy, and third, to evolve a theoretical approach and method for the ideal self, or the narrative self. In order to achieve these three aims, the following research questions are developed:

1.   Do the women active in congregations have dangerous memories of resistance and protest against gendered context? Do they face the dichotomous and contradictory gender roles that continuously negotiate with patriarchy in congregational cultures?

2.   Are narratives or narrative pedagogy effective in discerning who they are? Does a narrative pedagogy have the potential that empowers each woman and women's groups to take hold of their freedom, and fuel their desire to claim and rework the self based on their holistic development by crossing over the border of domesticity and stereotype?

3.   Are there possibilities that women's active involvement in religious congregations offer them self-confidence, self-fulfillment, and self-realization? Are there ways to empower women to balance her newfound personal freedom in Christ and the gendered directives of a patriarchal culture?

Guided by the main research questions, my study looks for their dangerous memories of struggle as well as resistance based on their experience, and the powers of narratives, and an approach for the possibly ideal self who encourages their representational accounts, with particular attention to their langue use, conflicts, gestures,

insights responding to these issues. These aims and questions will guide and lead to an appropriate methodology and will be used repeatedly in the process of analysis.

<div align="center">Natures and Limitations</div>

The above aims and questions are asked to meet the two aspects of my study. One is in regard to conceptualizing my study in terms of feminist theories, literature reviews, and the practical issues through an appropriate research method. In that sense, narrative inquiry is used in this study to contain women's voices in respect to their social, familial, and religious experience in the andocentric culture. It also relies on a rich interdisciplinary study or tradition capturing, generalizing, analyzing, and reporting women's dimension of experience over time and the relationship between their individual experience and cultural context.

There are many forms of narrative research methods but this inquiry has common characteristics: avoidance of the objectification of the research partners, transformative research method, flexibility, relationships or collaboration between the researcher and others or between practices and theories, interdisciplinary orientation, reflexivity, the universality of stories, and narrative as a method as well as the phenomenon under the study. In particular, I chose to use this narrative inquiry for the following reasons: it helps reveal women's unheard voice and invisible existence in patriarchal culture; avoids the objectification of the subjects or research partners; seeks to contribute positive positioning of the research within the communities being researched; validates experiences of women that otherwise would remain undocumented. The data of this study consisted of the field data gained from eleven autobiographical narrative in-depth interviews and transcripts of interviews. Theory comes last and it emerges from or

through data collection and analysis because this research is inherently inductive and reflective.

This study captures women's experience well but is primarily limited to investigating Korean Christian women's experiences. Thus, I cannot say this study covered the religious, social, economic, and educational diversity of research subjects. In general, the underprivileged or marginalized groups not being given an opportunity to participate in being interviewed tend to present a specific limitation and vulnerability that discourage them from providing their own ideas, feelings, senses, and experiences and opening their mind to a stranger, a researcher. It was my focus how I could make subjects feel comfortable when I had conversation with them in terms of the in-depth interview. In addition, research results might make communities of faith unpleasant or cause distress, conflicts, and feelings of increased vulnerability, and more burdens for women and their congregations. In that sense, this research calls attention to how its outcomes contribute to the community and avoid creating more problems of or imposing shame on faith communities without providing available alternatives for women's questions.

Women's spiritual and theological development, specifically with regard to their subjectivity or self-agency through narrative teaching, has been addressed in the religious educational field. What makes this study significant? This will provide an assessment of religious education from feminist theological perspective within the conservative Korean congregations. It will draw on and bring to light the cultural and religious implications of the development of women's narrative self, of their understanding of God, and communities of faith because of the qualitative data gained from Korean Christian women within the Korean church context.

Audience

This study draws out how the women active in Korean congregations learn, internalize, apply, and challenge gendered directives and roles. As a result, it assists religious educators and Christian leaders to understand the specific needs of women. It disseminates messages raising awareness of gender based-context and practices, supporting Christians to determine and then take action to achieve gender quality and empower women within their congregations. In that sense, As a result, this project will provide knowledge and insights to religious educators, ministers who are interested in women's issues, and Christian women who struggle with gendered practices in their congregational contexts. Korea in this study refers to South Korea.

Overview

This dissertation consists of six main chapters. The introductory chapter entails the motivation, background, aims, nature, and overview for the study.

The primary focus in chapter two is to demonstrate how come we can say that Korean Christian women do not reclaim self-agency. In a concrete way, the lack of representation and exclusion of women in leadership positions from heir family, society, and communities of faith will be provided as criteria to evaluate their reality. Whether Korean women have only dangerous memories and stories of oppression, suffering, and exclusion rather than resistance against the their reality and what gendered ideologies and practices still produce the template -women's inferiority/men's superiority- are provided as evidence that mirror their reality.

Korea has suffered over numerous invasions and numerous national struggles with its neighbors in its five thousand-year history. Thus, women's underrepresentation

can be illuminated in relation to Korea's under-representation and dependence on foreign powers. Christianity is a Western religion disseminated in Korean multi-religious context. Accordingly, the issues regarding the colonization and acculturation of Christianity will be explored in terms of the identity formation and lived experience stories of Korean Christian women.

This third chapter will turn specifically to features used to compose narrative pedagogy. Its function, potential, and power that narrative inherently possesses will be illuminated: to transmit a faith tradition and divine grace in the world, to influence over the building and articulating of the personal, spiritual, and theological self of women, to recognize liberative power and resistance to challenge the gendered culture and system, and to stimulate therapeutic healing, catharsis, and vital creativity by helping women to imaginatively access the emotional depths of existential crisis and despair. Ultimately, how the characteristics or potentials of narrative will affect to foster women's critical reflection on gendered setting and thus full development of self-agency or their narrative self with feminist theological eyes.

In the chapter four, such issues as women specific experience, their spiritual and theological development, women's ways of knowing, self-assertion, and self-compassion will be investigated as the ways to promote the sense of their dignity and to acknowledge their own competence, strengths, and accomplishments. Special concerns will go to the narrative or dialogical self that contains self-mediated, positioned, authored, speaking practices and development. Thus, the full development of the narrative self or narrative autonomy empowers women to take active part in the formation of their identity, protect the right to speak, and to bring their actions into compliance with their sense of

subjectivity and their own stories. Further, the development of the narrative self critiques the gender biased image of women and creates a space for rewriting a self-narrative in which women are allowed to describe themselves, emancipating their stories and analyzing gender inequality.

Chapter five discusses the narrative methodology. The chapter outlines the tenants, the characteristics, the philosophical roots, analysis, and weak points as well as strong points of narrative methodology.

Chapter six presents the research design and the main findings of the research. It contains the analysis of the qualitative data or field texts such as interviews from Korean Christian women in the congregations of male-dominant leaderships. At issue is how the subjects understand their needs and experiences by patriarchal message that asks women to remain silence and disregard their stories and experience, and what telling their stories means to them, ascertaining whether and how those in patriarchal congregation unwittingly participate in, and respond to be internalized or resist the gendered context and stereotype. It also discusses the indicators of resistance and self-sabotage that come with the prospect of relinquishing or offsetting andocentric cultural power of the organized congregations. Based on the data gathered from the subjects, I will discuss how the vocabularies and practices of religious education via narrative or narratives as participatory learning are related to the development of narrative self.

In the conclusion, I will suggest concrete strategies to help Korean Christian women in nurturing their narrative self, engendering deep adaptive changes. Of particular concern is to pinpoint and unpack the patriarchal messages passed down and internalized by Korean Christian women, and Korean Christian female from their

spiritual and theological understandings of gender. Tracing how women think themselves in gendered structure and internalize and practice or challenge patriarchal message in their churches will assist religious educators in understanding the specific needs of the women, in raising serious awareness to gendered messages, and in bringing about gender inclusive transformation to communities of faith.

Chapter Two

Dangerous Memories of Struggles: the Context

Acknowledging that women still occupy lower ranks and are discriminated in the workplace compared to their male counterparts, Korean government launched the first five-year packages as an effort to raise the female labor force participation rate in which it provides childcare service and strongly encourages that fifty percent of candidates proposed by parties for the national Assembly or Local Council elections and for regional assemblies 30 percent of candidates must be women.[1] Truly, Korea has experienced the positive transformation and enhancement of women's social status over the last thirty years considering such references as economic growth, political democracy, and the development of women in public life, their welfare, and living condition, their pursuit of higher education reflect the optimistically plausible indicators in assessing the reality of women in Korea.[2]

In this backdrop, some claim the election of the first female president in 2013 proves the improvement of the social status of Korean women. Others have a little different view about it: at first glance, her election as the country's first female president can be seen as the positive change in the status of the Korean women but Korea has a lot of problems-the biggest gender income gaps, and gendered practices dominated by men-to be addressed until Korean women experience the improvement of women's social

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[1] Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 178.

[2] Jennifer Jihye Chun, *Organizing at the Margins: The Symbolic Politics of Labor in South Korea and the United States* (Ithaca, NY: ILR Press, 2009), 50-56.

status and gender-equality in their daily life. For instance, the World Economic Forum's

Global Gender Gap index as of 2012 reveals that "Korea's gender equality of is ranked as

108th of 135 countries around the world just behind the United Arab Emirates and one

place ahead of Kuwait so Korea's gender inequality is the highest in the developed

world."[3] As this report shows, Korea in these days still remains as a highly patriarchal

society and the churches under influence of Korean society also are not different from

social climate that discriminate against women.

All in all, Koreans are welcoming their first female president and enjoy the

improvement of women's social status resulting from women's pursuit of higher

education, democratic advancement, and economic prosperity, and rapid growth in

Christianity. However, some criteria to assess women's social status tell that Korean

remains a patriarchal society so the freedom and voices of women need to ring loudly and

their self-agency or representation needs to reclaim.

<u>Dangerous Memories: Between Suffering and Resistance</u>

There are many ways in assessing the level of autonomy and subjectivity of

women. The concept of 'dangerous memories or subversive knowledge' by Sharon

Welch can be a tool to critique the degree of self-agency and subjectivity of women in

Korean context. Her dangerous memories, or subjugated knowledge refer to those stories

and experiences that have been silenced by the power in the terms of power dynamics.

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[3] Moon, "The Production and Subversion" in *Under Construction*, 80. Critics are taking notes that Park has appointed women for only two of eighteen Cabinet positions although she put forward her campaign pledge to raise women's social status. One of the two positions, the minister in charge of gender equality, has been held by a woman since it has being lunched in 2001. In comparison with the cases in Park's previous governments,-her predecessor, Lee Myung-bak also nominated two women to start his term, while former President, Roh Moo-hyun, Lee's liberal predecessor, named four, Park appointed only one woman for her new Cabinet.

Liberation theologies use this term to disclose the roots of suffering and to encourage the hope gained through resistance.[4] These accounts of liberation theology "are a declaration of the possibility of freedom and justice, and they may be examined in an attempt to understand what enables resistance in specific, historical situations. Such memories are an affirmation of human dignity."[5] That is, it is recognition of the inherent power of inequity defining relations between the powerful and the powerless which forces the powerless to be more creative and dynamic in attempting struggle and resistance.

According to Welch, the dangerous memories of suffering of the marginalized can be an empowerment or resource to challenge oppression. If dangerous memories of suffering are transformed into impetus to move forward then and not till then dangerous memories are "a people's history of resistance and struggle, of dignity and transcendence in the face of oppression"[6] leading Christianity to a critique of what commonly takes it for granted and struggle and resistance. If the concept of dangerous memories or stories of suffering as well as resistance and freedom of the powerless or the oppressed is used as a means to evaluate the state of self-agency of Korean women, one wonders if women in Korean context and congregations have ever been the bearers of this dangerous memories or stories of resistance and freedom throughout its history and have ever created opportunities to engage in various forms of resistance and struggle for gender- inclusive change. When it comes with this question, Kang Nam Soon states the women in Asia including Korea have a lot of stories and memories of suffering and exclusion but they

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[4] Welch, *Feminist Ethic of Risk*, 104.

[5] Ibid., 41.

[6] Ibid., 155.

seem not to have as much experience of struggle, resistance, confrontation, challenges, and freedom that lead them to political action.[7]

The absence of these kinds of dangerous memories of Korean women is seen as one of some proofs that their subjectivity and agency have not been secured in the remaining patriarchal context. For example, many married women are still introduced themselves as someone's mother or someone's wife to others rather than their own name. In the meantime, they maintain their family name after marriage without following their husband's name. Some might jump to conclusion that Korean women are allowed to enjoy somehow their self-agency in their marital status rather Western women who adopt their husband's name after marriage. However, that is not the case. Feminists who are aware of Korean practices give weight to the claim that retaining their own name conceptually implies that the married woman is an outsider brought into the household to provide services for their family members rather than her self-agency is respected.[8] In the same vein, one can observe that the greater part of their talking is about their husband and children rather than themselves and much of their joy comes their children and husband.

Sadly, women's voiceless, faceless, nameless, anonymity, and invisibility result from patriarchal system "where women's speech has been devalued, trivialized as gossip, small talk, silly chatter"[9] whereas men's speech has been valued as a means of creating world whose center they occupy. In that sense, they are not used expressing their

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[7] Nam-Soon Kang, "Creating 'Dangerous Memory': Challenges for Asian and Korean Feminist Theology," Ecumenical Review 47, no. 1 (January 1, 1995): 24-27.

[8] Young-A Cho, "Gender Difference in Korean Speech," in *Korean Language in Culture and Society*, ed. Ho-Min Sohn (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2006), 189-91.

[9] Kaye Ashe, *The Feminization of the Church?* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1997), 67.

thoughts, suppressed anger, and feelings so what they want to talk or express remains

deep inside. As a result, many of married middle-aged women suffer from *hwa-byung* in

Korean, or somatic and psychological manifestations of suppressed anger or rage or

chronic repression or suppression of negative emotions and a culture-bound syndrome. It

depends on cases but typical patients with *hwa-byung*, three-fourths of the patients that

complained of this syndrome are women, who linked their condition to anger provoked

by domestic problems such as conflicts with their husband and laws-in.[10] In fact, that no

culturally sanctioned outlets are allowed to women that can relieve their *han* - an

unexpressed mixture of grievance, regret with resulting heartache- results in bringing in

many physical and mental problems to the women in this context hem.

In that women's forming their subjectivity and seeking for their inner growth and

dignity are closely related to gender equality, exploring the history and influence of

Korean feminist theology would be helpful in identifying with the level of self-agency of

Korean women.

Feminist theology started in Korea in the 1970s, focusing on human rights and

resistance against political dictatorship. In the early 1980s, feminist theology blossomed

in Korea. The Korean Association of Women Theologians (KAWT) was at the center of

Korean feminist theology. It was established in 1983 and made strong contributions to the

development of feminist theologies in Korean context. The KAWT drew attention to such

themes as feminist exegesis, unification and peace, and patriarchal value system

permeated in their daily basis, holding campaigns and events to challenge gendered

practices within churches and providing academic feminist critique via publishing, Bible

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[10] Tseng, *Handbook of Cultural Psychiatry*, 253–54.

studies, seminar, and workshops, etc. Many scholars and seminary graduates have worked with this women's organization. Agendas and themes dealt with were the following: how women can understand a male God under the context of sexism or the unjust hierarchy that places men over women? ; how the female God is characterized?; what the image of Jesus Christ from the perspective of the Korean women is? etc.[11]

Upon the active work of the KWAT, the articles and books (Ruether, 1979, 1985; Russell 1982, 1985;Schussler Fiorenza 1981;Trible 1984) from the West were translated into Korean. Korean or Korean American feminist theologians published many books (Lee OJ 1983, 1985;Kim YO 1988; Lee HS 1991; Choi MJ, 1987, 1990, Chung HY, 1990, Kang NS 1998) in relation to feminist theological issues, sharing their experiences as a Korean woman. Chung Hyun Kyung, Kang Nam Soon, Anne Joh, Kim Na Mi who teach at one of American seminary or theological schools published books and articles in which they documented voices and stories of lived experience of Korean Christian women, and pinpointed their particular context in the category of Korean feminist theologies, Asian feminist theologies, and postcolonial feminist theologies.[12] The Korean feminist theologians attempted to present a God who takes side with the wounded and

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[11] Meehyun Chung, ed., *Breaking Silence: Theology from Asian Women's Perspective* (Delhi: ISPCK/EATWOT, 2006), 77-90.

[12] Man Ja Choi, "한국여성신학- 그 신학 새로하기의 어제와 내일 [The Past and Future of Korean Feminist Theology: Doing Theology with Women's Experience as a New Methodology]" *The Korean Theological Discourse* 22 (2001), 293-324. I translated Korean texts into English. The followings are the title of the books translated in Korean: *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (1973) by Mary Daly; *Sexism and Godtalk, Gaia and God: An Ecofeminist Theology of Earth Healing* (1983) by Rosemary R.Ruether; *Human Liberation in a Feminist Perspective* (1974), *House of Freedom: Authority in Feminism Theology* (1987) by Letty Russell; *In Memory of Her* (1983) by Elizabeth. S. Fiorenza, *Texts of Terror* (1984) by Philly Trible; *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discussion* (1992) by Elizabeth A. Johnson. *Modern Feminist Theology* (1994) by Nam Soon Kang; *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology* (2000) by Hyung Kyung Chung; *Heart of the Cross: A Postcolonial Christology* (2006) by Anne Joh; "Collaborative Dissonance: Gender and Theology in Asian Pacific America (2012)" by Na Mi Kim.

powerless, using Korean women's lived experience as sacred text in doing their theologies. They also tried to find their languages and voice in a theological and spiritual culture filled with patriarchal, colonial, and globalizing capitalistic messages.

Korean feminist theologies gave Korean Christian women a wake-up call, fostering them to critically reflect the ways that structures of ideological systems of patriarchy pervasive over in their self-understanding, biblical interpretation, and duality life, engaging in all activities to transform their memories of suffering into resistance to oppressive structures and energy and hope for their transformation. Nonetheless, one still wonders how many organizations for Christian women have played in empowering Korean Christian women to have dangerous memories of resistance and protest against male privilege and bringing gender-inclusive transformation to their context beyond the memories of cultural and social despair and defeatism, and suffering and helplessness. What blocks women from having their dangerous memories of resistance and freedom will be elaborated in the next chapters?

<u>Women Trapped in Confucian Framework</u>

Kim Kyung IL asserts through his book, *The Country Must Survive Only if Confucius Dies* (1999) that Confucius must die for this country to live because Confucianism has been a political deceit and hypocrisy that encourages factionalism, regionalism, patriarchy, and obsession of authoritarian hierarchy that stifle Korean people and marginalize the powerless and the disposed.[13] His statement was highly controversial because he was extremely critical of a whole way of life of Koreans that

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[13] Kyung IL, Kim. *The Country Can Survive If Confucius Dies* (서울: 바다출판사, 1999), 7–8.

reflects ethical codes as mainly hierarchy, gender inequality, conformity, suppression of expression, and dichotomy.

Confucianism was brought from China to the Korean peninsula during the *Chosen* Dynasty (1392-1910). Importantly, the Dynasty was immersed exceptionally in the two practices among many Confucian tenets: recognition of the aristocratic and social elite class called *yangban* in Korean and formalism-ritualism (ceremonies and rituals) for the loss that was necessary for the Dynasty to regulate and maintain their system and power, controlling the people, and bringing negative outcomes to Korean women throughout the next 250 years.[14]

How did the *yangban*-centered ruling affect actual gender relations? Looking at the Korean women's lives during *Goryeo* times (918-1392) before the *Chosen* dynasty was founded will be helpful in understanding how women's lives had changed since the foundation of *Chosen* dynasty. Given that during the *Goryeo* period, "it was possible for women to be heads of families ... registers did not discriminate on the basis of gender," the status of women and wives was seen as relatively high at this time.[15] Polygamy was common but each wife was not discriminated among the wives in this polygamy practice. They could continue to live with their birth family or after thirty they were allowed to live in their own separate home. They were also qualified to receive inheritance from their parents. The inheritance of property made women able to afford to pay their living expenses and enjoy the equal rights of a free and independent lifestyle even after

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[14] Kaku Sechiyama, *Patriarchy in East Asia a Comparative Sociology of Gender*, The Intimate and the Public in Asian and Global Perspectives (Leiden: BRILL, 2013), 145.

[15] Chai-Shin Yu, *The New History of Korean Civilization* (Bloomington, IN: iUniverse, 2012), 83.

marriage.[16] All in all, Korean women were largely in command of their own lives during this period.

Its ideology or basic unit is patrilineage. Sons were preferred; Inheritance was supposed to go to only sons or agnation; sons were allowed to continue family lines during the *Chosen* period. The polygamous marriage customs and distribution of inheritance custom passed down by *Goryeo* were not welcome by *Chosen* dynasty because *Chosen* ruling party needed to reinforce the male dominated system, which viewed such marriage institutions as an affront and underlined the hierarchical family order and inheritance system. In the drastically shifted paradigm, women were admonished to obey the 'Women's Three Ways and Seven Evils'[17] instead of their past liberated routines. Women's Three Ways to follow is that women should obey their father before marriage, their husbands after marriage, and their son after the death of their husband. The Seven Evil conducts were about: disobedience to a husband's family, not giving birth to a male child, contracting malignant disease, gossiping, and stealing. If they violated one of these, they could be divorced at that time. In particular, the Korean saying 'male and female must be separate' was concerted with androcentric practices and norms of the Confucian ethical codes and thus it contributed to the creation of gender-biased division and stereotypes of social roles of women and men,[18] confining women to inside home or private areas such as housework and kitchen and men to outside home, public work such as business, teaching, speaking, and leadership position.

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[16] Yu, *The New History*, 83-84.

[17] Sechiyama, *Patriarchy in East Asia*, 145-46.

[18] Ibid., 146-47.

The virtues of filial piety intertwined with the religious practice of ancestry worship were the supreme mechanism to structurally maintain the patrilineage or androcentric system that Confucianism stresses. The core message of filial piety calls for children or people to serve and obey their parents and ancestors. The institution of particular ritual obligations such as parents' funerals and the annual death day celebration (ancestor worship) as an expression of filial piety for their ancestry functioned as reinforcing paternal authority and solidarity among male humans-father, husband, and son delegated by the duties of ritual to family head, or men. In this context, women were demanded to demonstrate the virtue of filial piety by reproducing boys to carry on the family name and obeying their family heads - father, husband, and son. The problem is that this patriarchal practice coupled with ancestry worship has instilled and passed down the ethical codes of conduct in which males shall reign over females and the elders the young within the patrilineal family and society by becoming a familial religion.[19]

The family relationships boil down to the relationship between parents and children, or the relationship between father and son, rather than husband and wife or other relations among family members. Ultimately, the message that the filial piety highlights is that family shall be operated and continued by such principles as hierarchy and authority of men, and obedience towards men, beyond love and harmony among family members.[20] In many Korean families, for instance, only male descendants are allowed to deeply bow before the dead ancestors in ancestral worships or rituals when

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[19] Kang, "Creating 'Dangerous Memory,'" January 1, 1995, 21-25.

[20] Antton Egiguren Iraola, *True Confucians, Bold Christians Korean Missionary Experience: A Model for the Third Millennium* (Amsterdam;Rodopi, 2007), 256-57.

deep bowing is considered to be a symbolic activity to show the respect and thanks to their ancestors and ask for wishes for their future. Women, on the other hand, are supposed to cook and invisibly prepare for the rites. These Confucian traditional practices and spirit were passed down to future generations with the ideology of men's representation and women's underrepresentation in which women are seen as providers for the physical needs of their families and thus self-sacrificing beings for others.

Patriarchal Spirit and Chronic Sexism

As previously mentioned, it is patriarchal power that maintains and endorses gender inequality in Confucianism. Scott John and Gordon Marshall define patriarchy as "literally rule of the father"; the term was originally used to describe social systems based on the authority of male heads of household. It has now acquired a more general usage, especially in some feminist theories, where it has come to mean male domination in general."[21] When the definition by John and Gordon is illuminated in the concept of gender inequality, the patriarchal control or authority uses dualistic concepts - the hierarchical relation between male and female or a hierarchical authority controlled and dominated by males - as mechanisms to reproduce and uphold its power. Ultimately, this dualistic perspective reproduces and reinforces the templates that men are superior to women or women inferior to men, representation of men and underrepresentation of women in human beings, the subjugation of women and the privileges of men-over the

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[21] "Patriarchy" in *A Dictionary of Sociology*, eds., John Scott and Gordon Marshall (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2009)

understanding of gender, social structures, religious practices, and legal codes, perpetrating sexist or gender discrimination all over the world.[22]

One may not dismiss and overlook patriarchy and its ensuing complications as an important matter for women in that the patriarchal dualistic template or the pattern of male superior and female inferior causes not only gendered practices but also other forms of unequal, unjust power distribution, impairing human rights and dignity of people. For example, feminists find the reasons of the destruction ecosystem and exploitation of nature or environment in patriarchal spirit. Rosemary Ruether analyzes why nature is called Mother Earth or Nature but not Father Earth and how women can be identified with nature under patriarchal systems. The history naming the Earth or Nature as a Mother dates back to beginning of human civilization. The first Greek god was actually a goddess. She is Gaia, or Mother Earth, who created herself out of primitive chaos. Gaia, or Mother Earth or Nature gives birth to all life from her fertile womb, nurtures, and heals all the living, interacting with environment. Herein, the earth and women have been seen as identical in that the both have the abilities to produce life and the identification is undoubtedly linked to hierarchical dualistic paradigm giving a clue to rationalize or justify for the powerful to subjugate the powerless.

This hierarchical dualism creates a one-way, top-down, uniformed, and arbitrary pyramid model in which man is at the peak, a woman in a separate sphere beneath a man, earth, and all of nature at the bottom as a state upon which to walk.[23] As long as

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[22] Natalie Fenton, "Feminism and Popular Culture," in *The Routledge Companion to Feminism and Postfeminism*, ed. Sarah Gablme (London: Routledge, 2001), 86-87.

[23] Rosemary R. Ruether, *Womanguides: Readings toward a Feminist Theology* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 36.

patriarchy at work, the gendered practice and theories are repeated over and over through the pattern of life for families, social life, and religious contexts; humans will not stop abuse, exploitation, and destruction of nature or the planet, without knowing their doing to nature is to destroy themselves. In that sense, patriarchy does not just hurt women but all kinds of people including men, society, race, class, gender orientation, and nature. That is why Reuther calls for "a prophetic vision to shape a new world on earth, one that was not defined by domination"[24] that gives clues to have dangerous memories of struggle and resistance against sexism, racism, classism, and defeatism and provides a ground of hope to change gendered perspectives and practices.

As afore-described, sexism is a productive of patriarchy, fossilizing disparity of relationships and power dynamic between the sexes, and ultimately, to the oppression of women. Naila Kabeer employs the term *doxa*, a Greek word meaning common belief or popular opinion to illuminate how patriarchal influences are prevalent over traditions, beliefs, and cultures. *Doxa* denotes all aspects of daily life, resulting in the taken-for-granted or naturalized ideology that seemingly is beyond course or argumentation. Then, what does Kabeer want to argue with the term of *doxa*? According to her, one of the intents of patriarchal or hegemonic male supremacy is to take women away their agency by driving people to sink in a consciousness based on patriarchal *doxa*, by domesticating

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[24] Ruether, *Womanguides*, 30.

women to accept and repeat their selflessness or the loss of self, sacrifice for others, and submission to others as their destiny.[25]

As described earlier, *Samjongido* or the 'Women's Three Ways to Follow' embeds that women are nothing without the guidance of male and their social status is determined by their parents, husband, or son's social status by rendering that "women, you will never become fully independent and autonomous beings." In this situation, marriage is a requirement to women regardless of whether they want to marry or their philosophy of life. This no-choice context to drive women into marriage maintains and reinforces the ideology of wise mother and good wife as an attempt to confine women to private areas.

Likewise, the concept, Korean wise mother and good wife, has added the duty of educational manager to her roles. As a result, her children's going to prestigious colleges, making successful life, and even choosing spouse must have been considerably to her responsibility. Seeing Korean mothers that do not hesitate to take on drudgery to make more money for their children's education, their attitude seem almost obsessive beyond just educational desire for their children. There are some words that sarcastically hint at Korean mothers' educational obsession or enthusiasm: *chima baram*, translated literally 'the skirt wind' and *kirogi umma*, a term referring to Korean Christian families who live in English speaking countries seeking education for their children. First, the *chima baram* comes from the mocking image of the mothers (assuming they wear skirts) who run about

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[25] Naila Kabeer, "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment," *Development and Change* 30, no. 3 (1999): 438-41.

here and there swishing their skirts in order to control their children's education. This

derogatory term implies "the newly intensified mothers' role in their children's education

in the context of South Korea' neoliberal transformation"[26] who exert their monetary

power and put too much pressure on their children by meddling in school activities and

visiting teachers and the schools excessively to ensure the academic success of their

children. Secondly, *kirogi umma* refers to the Korean mothers who live in English

speaking countries with their children for the sake of their children's education while

their husbands stay behind in Korea to provide financial support. Both *chima baram* and

kirogi umma are negatively referred to because these mothers cause a lot of social and

personal problems such class gap, distorted parental enthusiasm for their children's

education, and divorces or extramarital affairs out of their couple's separately living.[27] In

some sense, these mothers or women who create or jump to these social phenomena

might think that *chima baram* and *kirogi umma* are one of the means for them to extend

their influences –wealth and their husbands' social position- outside home, regarding

such antisocial enthusiasm for their children to an act of sacrifice and unconditional

commitment[28] while pouring their energy and time on their children' life rather their own

life. Nonetheless, taking close look at these happenings, one can find that those are

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[26] So Jin Park, "Educational Manager Mothers as Neolibreal Maternal Subjects," in *New Millennium South Korea: Neoliberal Capitalism and Transnational Movements*, ed. Jesook Song (New York: Routledge, 2011), 102.

[27] Jeehun Kim, "Downed and Stuck in Singapore:Lower/Middle Calss South Korean Wild Geese(*Kirogi*) Children in Sigapore," in *Globalization, Changing Demographics, and Educational Challenges in East Asia*, eds. Emily Hannum, Hyunjoon Park, and Yuko Goto Butler (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2010), 274-75. *Kirogi* refers to goose in Korean so *kirogi* family also was called the migratory family or educational migrants split by theducation of their children.

[28] Park, "Educational Manager," *New Millennium South Korea*, 103-04.

associated with patriarchal system in that it promotes the ideology of self-loss of women

judging women's reclaiming self-agency and seeking for self-development as selfish or

egocentric.[29]

Women's Reality in Korean Society

Korea was seen as the country to report the highest male-to-female birth ratios

because of preference for sons but the sex ratio of 108.2 boys to per 100 girls as of 2010

signifies that Korean parents' preference for boys is being reversed and decreased. It also

suggests that the main reason behind the reversal has been the economic boom and the

entry of women into the workforce, the government campaigns extolling the virtues of

daughters, industrialization, and urbanization etc. The 'male-orientated family registry'

system based on family head or *hojuje*" had contributed to violating "violated the spirit of

gender equality in the Korean constitution for a long time. Until this decision, in Korean

families only male members could be the head and children had to take their father's

surname"[30] was completely abolished in 2008. The male-orientated family registry

system was annulled and the imbalance of sex ratio was being reversed so that many

expected that such changes would bring about drastic changes to Korean women's life

but the issues of gender inequality or women's self-agency remains one of many

women's issues to be addressed.

For example, sex offences against women are on the rise. It makes one skeptical

of the assumption that women's social status in Korean society is enhanced. According to

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[29] Helga Druxes, *Resisting Bodies: The Negotiation of Female Agency in Twentieth-Century Women's Fiction* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1996), 10-11.

[30] Choong Soon Kim, *Kimchi and IT: Tradition and Transformation in Korea* (Seoul: Ilchokak, 2007), 114.

a report, about 87% of working women have been sexually and physically harassed. The number or rate of women who are exposed to domestic violence and rape has also increased. Sexual violence is defined as any physical, verbal, and psychological crime, which infringes upon a woman's right to decide her sexual behavior, and includes all behaviors that cause the fear of sexual attacks and constraints on women's activity: rape to sexual harassment, child molestation, indecent exposure, and stalking.[31] The reality that gender-based crime is on the rise can also mirror the patriarchal context that women are not considered as subjective beings.

Many Koreans go with the flow that 'one daughter raised well is worth ten sons' though they do not know how this popular slogan came into use. Some might welcome this general trend because they think that this saying reflects the radical shift of attitudes to prefer girls to sons, expecting it to offset the long-held practice or assumption that 'one son is worth ten daughters.'[32] Besides, a report reflects that the mindset of this slogan is not just a dream of feminists in Korea. Forty-eight percent of Korean women who were surveyed apologized for giving birth to a daughter and felt ashamed that they did not have a son in 1985. By contrast, "the proportion had dropped to 17 percent,"[33] down from over 30 percent by 2003. Given the change of the number, many parents do not care anymore whether they have a boy or girl because they don't feel any difference between a boy and a girl in creating their family happiness.

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[31] Young-Hee Shim, "Sexual-Violence-Sexual-Harassment in a Risky Society," *Korean Journal* (Spring 1998): 126.

[32] Hee An Choi, *Korean Women and God: Experiencing God in a Multi-Religious Colonial Context* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 51-52.

[33] Sidney B. Westley and Minja Kim Choe, *How Does Son Preference Affect Populations in Asia?* (Honolulu: East-West Center, 2007), 5.

Nonetheless, the high rate of sex-selective abortion in Korea pours cold water on the optimism that Korean women's economic situation and social status have been enhanced in many ways. Korea "today shows the highest level of sex-selective abortion, since their access to such technology is the highest. ... The availability of sex-selective technology may actually increase net proportions of girls 'missing," rather than simply substitute for lower-technology methods, by making it easier to discriminate against girls.[34] The Korean Ministry of Health and Social Affair has banned obstetricians from telling parents the sex of their unborn babies, intensifying their violation for performing the tests for the purpose of sex identification and suspending the medical licenses. Despite several regulations, the practice of a high number of doctors performing abortions continue because doing allows them to earn easy money. This selective abortion became one of the factors to bring about an imbalance in the sex ration in Korea.

As a result, a shortage of girls in elementary students and women are striking. Already, there are fewer female students in the elementary schools. It is not uncommon that the boys outnumbered girls in a coed classroom. Young women in a marriageable age from other countries have been imported by marriage agencies for rural men unable to find women to marry to them. This trend brought positive as well as negative impacts to Korean society.[35]

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[34] Woojin Chung and Monica Das Gupta, *Why Is Son Preference Declining in South Korea?: The Role of Development and Public Policy, and the Implications for China and India* (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2007), 3, Accessed March 10, 2014, GoogleLibtary e-book.

[35] Kyung Ah Kim, "The Sex Ratio Imbalance, Excess Bachelors," *The Hankyoreh Times,* June 9, (2001), accessed February 17, 2014, http://legacy.www.hani.co.kr/section-005100032/2001/07/005100032200107091935001.html.

Korea as one of the fastest-growing OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) has regarded its survival or economic growth as one of the nation's most urgent and important tasks so women's issues have been ignored. The government and women's organizations work hard to bring about gender-inclusive transformation but it still has a long way to go before women awaken what androcentric context looks like and how it is related to their subjectivity and agency.

Women in Communities of Faith

It is meaningful to turn to Christianity in Korea. Christianity is one of the dominant religions in the Korean multi-religious context. It is expected to speak about God and his son, Jesus Christ who came into the world to liberate people from sin and sufferings. Then, how have Protestant congregations made contributions to women's dangerous memories of resistance against discrimination? How have they taken the lead in recognizing how patriarchy has done and in resisting patriarchy's dominating grasp in Korean context filled with Confucian patriarchal power since it came to Korean peninsula over 200 years ago?

Though Korean churches are young, their rapid growth astonished the world. Western missionaries took their first step on Korean land with educational, social, and medical service over 200 years ago and confessed that "instead of sowing seed, we are already harvesting what has been already sown."[36] Today, five of the ten largest Protestant churches measured by the size of their membership in the world are in South Korea. It affirms the most remarkable growth rates of Korean Christianity in church

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[36] Minho Song, "The Diaspora Experience of the Korean Church and its Implications for World Mission," in *Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission*, ed. Hun S. Kim and Wonsuk Ma (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 120.

history. Timothy Lee provides the glimpse at the growing state of Christianity. "At the beginning of the twentieth century, Christians constituted less one percent of the Korean population. By the end of this century, according to 1995 survey by South Korean Statistics Office, Christians constituted 26.3 percent of the South Korean population, surpassing Buddhists, the next largest religious groups, at 23.3 percent." The speedy growing rate of Korean Protestant congregations makes some predict that soon Christianity will be the main religion in this multi-religious country.[37] Because of this rapid growth, Korean Protestant churches became one of the hotbeds of contemporary evangelicalism or home as one of the most vibrant evangelical protestant communities in the world over the last 120 years.

Then, one wonders how Christianity as an imported religion has affected to Korean society, specifically for women. Korean Bible that missionary translated in Korean "enabled the Korean church to grow as a healthy and rapidly multiplying indigenous church."[38] The translation of the Bible into *hangul*, the Korean vernacular, rather than Chinese characters for the upper and elite groups made it possible for their missionary to communicate with and work with the *minjung* (mass of people), especially women and girls (the *minjung* of the *minjung*) rather than the upper class.

Christian missionaries put considerable emphasis on girls' education by school service and dedicated to create women's small groups where women practiced reading the Bible, discussing their interests and issues, and teaching each other without male

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[37] Timothy S. Lee, "Beleaguered Success: Korean Evangelicalism in the Last Decade of the Twentieth Century," in *Christianity in Korea*, eds. Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Timothy S. Lee (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2007), 330.

[38] Minho Song, "The Diaspora Experience of the Korean Church and its Implications for World Mission," in Korean Diaspora and Christian Mission.

interference. Repeatedly, women could get an opportunity to learn how to read and write. It was a revolution and a gift to women in the Confucian society where schooling was only for boys while private areas such as house and kitchen were only for girls. The missionary strategy and policy made contribution to stimulating the Protestant church to root and sprout as a Korean church in Korean soil.[39]

When it comes with one of the successful stories for female Christians, Methodist churches "had been ordaining women since 1930" even when the ordination of women had been an unresolved issued in many Western countries. For example, American Methodist churches did not allow women to get ordained until 1956 the Church of England accepted the first ordination of women in 1973.[40] In that sense, Christianity in Korea empowered Korean churchwomen to have dangerous stories of their pioneering accomplishments and increased self-confidence, opportunities for learning, and self-development through their religious activities although some of their achievements were far more fragmentary and momentary.

Lee Inn Sook proves that the achievements of churchwomen have been temporary and fragmentary and their religious activities have not been based on egalitarian leadership or gender-inclusive relationships by enunciating the current situation of the leadership of Korean churchwomen:

> Despite Christianity's rapid growth in Korea, oppressive cultural values persist. In twenty-first century Korean and Korean American churches few women are given real access to leadership roles, though the majority of congregations is comprised

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[39] Donald N. Clark, "Mothers, Daughters, Biblewomen, and Sisters:An Account of Women's Work in the Korea Mission Field," Buswell and Lee, *Christianity in Korea*, 175.

[40] Margaret Jones, "Methodism and Wome," in *The Ashgate Research Companion to World Methodism*, eds. William Gibson, Peter S Forsaith, Martin Wellings (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 14-17.

of women. Conservative, fundamentalist Christianity, upholding a narrower understanding of Biblical authority, is par for the course in Korean Churches. Additionally, Korean churches continue to be deeply rooted in Confucian ideology, regarding women as inferior and maintaining their subservience to me. Presbyterians, Korea's largest Protestant denominational group, did not ordain women until 1995.[41]

It is reported that women comprise 18.5 percent of all United Methodist clergy, 75.3 of all ordained deacons, and 22 percent of all bishops as of 2002. Given the ratio of male-to female pastors in American Protestant churches, women have made substantial gains in the past ten years.[42] By contrast, there is no female bishop in Korean Protestant Church. The proportion of ordained female pastors is 5.7 percent and the proportion of lay female leadership in Korean Protestant churches is less than 2 percent. The mere existence of female clergy does not guarantee their acceptance in practice. Thus, not many female pastors serve congregations as senior or solo pastors, because church members or lay leaders do not want to invite female pastors as a senior pastor of their church that has over 100 parishioners in general. Leadership of both lay and clergywomen is not encouraged. There are a very few places for clergywomen to work.[43] Kang Nam Soon points out that "as far as I know, women's issues have not received full attention from the National Council of Churches in Korea (NCCK). Except for the women's desk, the leadership of NCCK has been exercised almost solely by men."[44]

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[41] Lee, *Passage to the Real Self*, 32.

[42] William E. Montgomery, "Serve, Silence, and Strength:Women in Southern Churches," in *Religion and Public Life in the South: In the Evangelical Mode*, eds. Charles Reagan Wilson and Mark Silk (Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press, 2005), 113.

[43] Sung Jan Bang, " Korean Churches, Are They Gender-Inclusive?," *Dang Dang News*, November 11, 2010, accessed October 30, 2013, http://www.dangdangnews.com/news/articleView.html?idxno=16050.

[44] Kang, "Creating 'Dangerous Memory,'" (January, 1995): 28.

It is common that when Korean churches hire their male senior, they force his wife to give up her own work or to support her husband, senior pastor, though she serves a different church as a pastor seniors. Korean Christians call them *samo-nim* in Korean or a pastor's wife.[45] The identity and role of *samo-nim* or wife of pastors in Korean congregation is very ambiguous. People expect them to work as if they were non-ordained minister along with their ordained husband so they are very committed in church work; preachers, pianists, cook, leading Bible study, teachers of church schools, counselor, etc. The roles of *samo-nim* are very stressful and often invisible to the congregation. Nonetheless, many studies of and programs for pastors' wives are the focus on how they can be more sacrificial or how they are more supportive and assistant to their husband pastor, instead of "woman-identifying-woman" or their marginal status in their congregation.[46]

It is true that women in Korean Protestant congregation simultaneously experience both empowerment and subordination by virtue of the marriage between culture and Christianity that has led them to experience "a deep sense of personal achievement and a more empowered, reconstituted self-identity," attaining conscious longings and an urge toward emancipation beyond domestic sphere imposed by Korean culture transformation to women's life in Korean culture.[47]

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[45] Kim, *Women Struggling for a New Life*, 72.

[46] Jung Ha Kim, *Bridge-Makers and Cross-Bearers: Korean-American Women and the Church*, (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1997), 40.

[47] Kelly H Chong, *Deliverance and Submission: Evangelical Women and the Negotiation of Patriarchy in South Korea* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 129-34.

On the other hand, the ideologies of patriarchal interpretation of Christianity with

Koreanized Confucianism instilled gendered directives and ways based on Confucians

ideology toward women. As a result, Korean churchwomen skills and dedications have

rarely been honored although they have made big contributions to their communities'

expanding and flourishing at an astonishing rate by actively engaging in church activities

such as fundraising, congressional procedure, and organizational management, choir,

social work, and church chores, etc.[48] Likewise, "the more religious the women are, the

more they tend to preserve traditional images of women within the church," being seen as

invisible and silence beings.[49] Korean churchwomen live in the context where two tracks-

emancipation given by Jesus Christ and subjugation from patriarchal society-coexist. All

in all, Christianity provides women with the double-edged sword or the dichotomous and

contradictory faith about women's identity - self-agency through freedom and

subjugation with patriarchal ideology - held in tension with one another. Congregations

are demanded to recognize that nobody must not be treated as an appendix self and a

second-class person; female Christians are demanded to mull over how to use the double-

edged sword and how they have to maintain that emancipatory identity as human beings

with holistic and healthy personality and dignity

<u>On the Negotiation Between Emancipation and Submission</u>

Such issues as the autonomous self-integrated Christian women and their freewill

are related to the complex and contradictory dynamics of intercultural, contextual

encounters in the context of globalization with the colonial past.

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[48] Lee, *Passage to the Real Self*, 41–42.

[49] Kim, *Bridge-Makers and Cross-Bearers*, 149.

Historically, Korea was founded in 2333 B.C. and called 'the land of the morning

calm' but Korea's history has not been calm or peaceful in that this country has been

invaded more than 900 times in its five thousand-year history or during its two thousand

years of recorded history.[50] Chinese regimes and rebels over and over plundered and

encroached upon this small land, and required for regular tributes and sacrifices,

threatening the probable confrontation might cause disastrous harms to Korea. Strong

powers such as Japan, China, Russia, and Western countries have long been competing

for the control of this country, and made attempts to their endless intrusion and armed

clashes, making the region surrounding this nation completely desolate.[51] Looking at its

brief history, Korea has never been practically independent and free. Korea had been

colonized by Japanese imperialists and is still under various forms of imperialisms in

light of capitalism, globalization based on capitalism and militarism.

First of all, Korean feminist theologians have been attempting to articulate the

sexist pattern as all feminist theologies universally do, struggling to change people's

mind-set considering women's issues such as their self-assertion and dignity as luxuries

or obstacles to church growth. In the meantime, they have attempted to harmonize the

tension between feminist universality and particularity of Korean women. Kwok Pui-lan

highlights the particular issues of Korean Christian women, or Asian feminist theological

issues: feminist theologies emerging from Asia are categorized as a sub-category of

feminism; the term feminism then mirrors theological discourse being developed by

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[50] Charles K. Armstrong. *The Koreas* (New York: Routledge. 2007), 4.

[51] Alexander Woodside, "The Chien-lung Reign," in *The Cambridge History of China: Part I. The Ch'ing Empire to 1800*. ed. Perterson Williard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 273-75.

middle-class white European and American women, without including Asian women's

particular issues to their culture or context.[52] Kwok also reminds "Japanese

conglomerates, Korean and Taiwanese companies are setting up multinational

corporations in many parts of the world. Feminists in East Asia can no longer claim to be

economically oppressed, without recognizing that they have the potential to benefit from

a global system that oppresses many others."[53] In that sense, the critique by Anne

McClintock makes sense: the separation between colonial and post-colonial eras or the

conquerors and the conquered which "remains tediously persistent despite constant

rebuttals by post-colonialists"[54] because this demarcation might prevent one from

detecting the tenacious legacies of imperialism and the accompanying notion of progress

today. Above all, imperialism is more inclusive than that of post-colonialism to her. It is

hard to distinguish oppressors and the oppressed in this globalized context as the critique

of McClintock.

Recognizing that Korea might have oppressed others in the name of globalization,

Korean feminist theologians also attempt to probe many issues such as the hyper-

capitalist flow, indigenous hybridity, mutlireligious and cultural identities that are present

in Korean people's daily basis. As an attempt, Hyun Kyung Chung proposes the

"survival-liberation-centered syncretism" with the notion of priest or priesthood of *han*

and the fusion of the selective use of both the Korean cultural religious, sociological,

economic, political resources and the Christian scriptures. The "survival-liberation-

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[52] Pui-lan Kwok, *Introducing Asian Feminist Theology* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2000), 39–41.

[53] Ibid., 41.

[54] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 10.

centered syncretism" concept is composed of the praxis for liberation and salvation, the images of Jesus appealing to Korean women, respect of interreligious dialogues, and cooperation to make this world peaceful beyond the doctrinal purity of Christian theologies.[55] Chung views the concept as a kind of religious wisdom to empower Korean female Christians to challenge patriarchal, hierarchical, imperial, and colonial residues, to confront the footprints that permeate over Korean theologies by Western-male centered theology, and to help maintain and restore the roots of own cultural, linguistic, and religious heritage. In her theology, Jesus is shown as a priest of *han* because he experienced *han* in person through the Crucifixion, the symbol for suffering, pain, torture, death, and resurrection, and works hard to resolve the *han* accumulated in the hearts of women, casting off his golden crown. Jesus is also understood as a fighter[56] who fights for justice and peace in the this world, and as a messenger of hope and creator of life who proclaims a new world where peace and harmony must not be maintained at the cost of the marginalized and the powerless.

Besides, her concept in a multi-religious context like Korea is an alternative way to create the various understandings of the divine who practically appeal to Korean Christians, especially women, challenging the myopia and limited religious symbols of God invented by white, male-centered classical theology, fabricated by imperialism and utilized by Korean male fundamentalist spiritual leaders.[57] Her theological discourse elaborated in the notion of the "survival-liberation-centered syncretism" is told to

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[55] Chung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again*, 66.

[56] Ibid., 53-73.

[57] Jenny Daggers, *Postcolonial Theology of Religions: Particularity and Pluralism in World Christianity* (London: Routledge, 2013), 135.

contribute to a greater understanding of God's activity and becomes the energy and spirit that empowers Korean women, mothers, and sisters to be the sun rather than the moon. Nonetheless, Chung did not elaborate on the precise nature of the distinction between the contextualization of theology and sheer syncretism. Consequently, the problem should be fully addressed for the Korean Christian world that is still resistant to syncretism.

Andrew Sung Park is a male theologian but his theology needs to be reviewed in terms of Korean feminist theologies in that his is characterized by the traits that feminist theologians describe. Sin and *han* in Korean - a fundamental feeling of defeat, resignation, the tenacity of life, unresolved resentments, or grudges - are his major theological concepts in his doing theology. He discusses the unspoken side of sin in theological discourse and presents the God who cries for the powerless or the heart-wounded from the non-patriarchal perspectives referring to the "critical wound of the heart generated by unjust psychosomatic repression, as well s by social, political, economic, and cultural oppression."[58] It is best described as the feeling of pain due to some intense and atrocious act and the inability to respond justly due to the unresolved nature of the act. Above all, Park also names four causes as the structure of *han* that one in this world faces: the capitalist global economy, patriarchy, racism, and cross religious or inter-religious problems. For Park, the capitalist global economy is a demonic structure focused on the love of money and profit, thus producing sin and *han*. Patriarchy is evil because it has destroyed the "image of humanity given by God through sexism."[59] Racial and cultural discrimination is idolatry, because racism "makes a god of one's own race...

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[58] Park, *Wounded Heart of God*, 10.

[59] Ibid., 49-50.

It worships skin rather than God."[60] Such discrimination also oppresses other races,

causing sin and *han*. In the greater structure of *han*, Park points out that there is a

fundamental problem in the Christian way of thinking about sin: it has been preoccupied

with sinners or oppressors and their well-being while devoting little attention to their

victims and their pain. Traditional doctrines of sin and salvation have emphasized the

moral agency of sinners without adequately dealing with the victims of sin and their pain.

Only when one takes into consideration the *han* and the wound of the victim, and the

meaning of salvation in light of the victim of sin,[61] can the impact and healing of sin and

sinners be fully observed.

"What happens when, armed with the belief in the rightness of its own cause, one

side win? How will the liberated oppressed live with their conquered oppressors?"[62]

Herein, the primacy of reconciliation and forgiveness is asserted. Miroslav Volf asserts

how hatred and retribution grows and exclusion infects everything with its hellish will.

Forgiveness might flounder if one excludes the enemy from the community of humans

even as she or he excludes herself or himself from the community. But no one can be in

the presence of the God of the crucified Messiah for long without overcoming this double

exclusion-without transposing the enemy from the sphere of monstrous inhumanity into

the sphere of shared humanity and herself from the sphere of proud innocence into the

sphere of common sinfulness.[63]

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[60] Park, *Wounded Heart of God*, 135.

[61] Ibid., 58-72.

[62] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 104.

[63] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace*, 124.

Park emphasizes forgiveness and reconciliation are resumed when *han* of the victims or the powerless who have been ignored in theological discourse, when the sin of the power and perpetrators ask for accountable forgiveness before God and the victims. In the same vein, Volf seeks for the negotiation between embrace and exclusion or justice and forgiveness. After critical reflection of the tension between embrace and exclusion and the powerful and powerless, one can understand why Jesus commands, "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you (Mt 5:44)," and how it can be done.

In this moment, one needs to pay special attention to the horizontal relationship between abusers or perpetrators and victims and the ones sinned against to bring about reconciliation and solidarity with God and envision the new world, rather than waiting for sinners to change themselves or letting abusers deal with their sin in the vertical relationship between God and themselves without doing anything to reconcile with the oppressed. Accordingly, Park asserts that when sin is illuminated in the relational and bilateral perspectives, one can access a more balanced vision of the other's situation and reconcile for the benefit of sides, the sinners and the victims.[64]

Many Korean women still are disturbed with *han* or problems such as wealth inequality and self-loss, oppression, and poverty, that such invisible global stream of oppressions such as neo/post-colonialism, capitalism, and militarism create victims whether these structures of sin acknowledge what happen to the victims or not. Nam Soon Kang underscores that Asian women "have not a transcending common character, because experience is molded by a certain place and in a certain time which cannot be

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[64] Andrew Sung Park, "Theology of Ehancement:Multiculturality in an Asian American Perspective," in *Wading through Many Voices: Toward a Theology of Public Conversation,* ed. Harold J. Recinos (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2011), 153-63.

universal. As aforementioned, women are not a homogeneous group so Kang calls upon one to avoid also the unitary and monolithic understanding in the experiences of women and instead, consider particular issues and the complexity, difference, hybridity, and diversity in his or her doing theology.[65] Her suggestion should be considered in theological discourse given the fact that tiger countries such as Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong have a lot of people who are very educated and good at their jobs, and consistently maintain high levels of economic growth whereas other countries in the same regions do not share the same experience with the so-called tiger countries in Asia.

Hee An Choi proposes Korean Christian women to devise or envision their own God as "the source of strength and survival," or a non-patriarchal God in Korean multi-religious and colonial context.[66] In a word, engaging in such work can be one of the ways to bring healing and restoration to their wounded heart resulting in a hope to transform socio-political, religious, and cultural context filled with gendered practices. In her proposal, God is presented as family, liberator, and friend. Mother God nurtures and takes care of her just born baby until her baby grows up. The images or symbols that she suggests are grounded on the concepts of from below or within the context of the experience of Korean Christian women, rather than above and outside that context. Jesus is also viewed as a mother and a woman. This God with such images or symbols as mother, woman, daughter, animator, and family empowers women to resist the normative

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[65] Namsoon Kang, "A Postcolonial Theological Reading of Orientalism and Neo-orientalism," in *Postcolonial Theologies: Divinity and Empire*, eds. Catherine Keller, Michael Nausner, and Mayra Rivera (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2004), 100-07.

[66] Hee An Choi, *Korean Women and God: Experiencing God in a Multi-Religious Colonial Context*, Women from the Margins (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 133.

structures that perpetuate the nobody-ness of the social weak including the Korean women.[67]

Korean feminist theologian have attempted to go beyond the gendered, colonized, and monopolized or Western kinds of theological paradigms and reconstruct their own theologies based on their experience, mentality, feeling, and context. Such attempts can be considered as a way to move forward, resist, and struggle to make successful stories, despite theological discourse still excluding or trivializing their voices. After Chung presented her plenary address as a Korean shaman and performed a spirit calling ritual, at the Seventh Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1991 held in Canberra, Australia, she "became a world celebrity but also received death threats from conservative Christians in Korea" who have been slow to ordain women and demand women to remain silent and obey their husband through texts of terrors that focus on abusing, rejecting, violating, and furthermore, oppressing women.[68] These texts were handed down to the readers today in the types of stories, and like all good stories that they have communicated their messages indirectly from generation to generation.

In that sense, feminist theologies by Korean feminist theologians are an attempt to identify with what Korean female Christians are and where they are, and to equip them with the ears and eyes to critically reflect what these stories are about, whose interests are being gained, and then to retell their stories with empowered imagination. Korean Christian women's emancipation and their issues are too much reliance on a few Korean

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[67] Choi, *Korean Women and God*, 9-44.

[68] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Women and Redemption: A Theological History*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 228.

feminist theologians; many still think feminist theological studies or attempts as luxuries or hindrances to the development of their congregations; Christian women in Korean congregations are still excluded from leadership positions and are seen as beings who are not decision-makers for their own work and life. Therefore, there is a long way to go until Korean Christian women reclaim their self-agency.

Doing a feminist theology in Korean context is a try to cross over the border between submission and emancipation given by Christianity, believing that "faith is confidence in what we hope for, the conviction of things not seen (Heb 11:1)." Even when Korean Christian women do not have dangerous memories of communal struggle and protest, their identity given by Christ can be a reference to resist the dark power of patriarchy that takes women's agency, liberation, dignity, and subjectivity from them. The evocative power by Christ can be an imaginative vitality, leading to the creation of the gender discrimination-free communities and rewrite their stories of the empowered and resilient self as children of God.

In next chapter, narratives to empower women to reclaim their self-agency and subjectivity will be discussed. How and why stories are so effective in awakening women and why they need dangerous memories and stories of struggle, resistance, and liberation will be examined in light of these stories. More importantly, the chapter will show what empowers these women to reclaim their self-agency and thus to create gender inclusive context.

Chapter Three

Narrative, Empowerment, and Women's Self-Agency

Kelly Chong observes "the complex meaning and dynamics of evangelical

women's engagement with the ideologies and practices of religious patriarchy as they

play out on women's religiosity and lives"[1] after conducting a research over a period of

sixteen months in which she interviewed sixty women active in Korean Protestant

churches. She concludes that religious experience and activities provided women in

Korean congregation the dilemma of a double-edged sword or the prophetic and

liberative stories and vision on the one hand, and on the other hand, several oppressive

mechanisms. The paradoxes of emancipatory experience newly found by their religious

activities and liberative stories of Jesus, and the patriarchal templates passed down and

internalized by Korean culture lead them to be exposed to the luminal space between

emancipation and submission or opportunity and crisis. Therefore, Christian women in

congregation should work hard to counteract their nameless, faceless, and voiceless

diseases, raise women's consciousness about their gendered principles and practices, and

shift the traditional paradigm in which they get caught in close parallels between the

opposite arenas, work for emancipation from obedience or self-loss.[2]

Aforementioned in chapter two, women's high level of education, general

economic-political development, and Christian's speedy growth in their membership are

expected to bring gender-inclusive transformation to Korean context. For Korean

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[1] Chong, *Deliverance and Submission*, 134.

[2] Ibid., 37-38.

Christianity and other religions, one can say that they have played a role in bringing

women emancipation and deliverance. Nonetheless, they have asked for even more

submission by still internalizing the authority of a patriarchal interpretation of Christian

messages and have been exposed the context that dispirit their self-agency.[3] In that sense,

investigating whether they have dangerous memories of resistance and liberation, one can

be a way to understand the multiple layers of self-agency and subjectivity that female

Christians in Korean Protestant churches enjoy in their context. When Christian religious

educators consider nurturing Korean Christian women to reclaim their self-agency to be a

goal of their education, narrative or storytelling also can be recommended as a

pedagogical means that facilitates them to rework their self against the patriarchal

dominating power and envision gender-inclusive transformation to their congregations,

then creates the *Kin-dom* of God referring to "a non-classist, nonsexist term that links the

biblical understanding of fullness of life, abundance of life, to family, a construct that is

very much part of women's daily experience."[4] In this chapter, the following questions

will be answered: how and why narrative or narrative pedagogy is so effective and

appropriative in generating an impulse to keep and reclaim their newly gained personal

emancipation in Christ proclaiming that there is "neither male nor female, nether slave

nor free...(Gal. 3:28)"; how does narrative pedagogy empower women to challenge the

clearly gendered directives that wives must "submit to their husbands (Eph. 5:22)" and

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[3] Choi, *Korean Women and God*, 45.

[4] "Korean Christinity and Chrisitan Women," in *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, eds. Letty M. Russell and J. Shannon Clarkson (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 162.

"women should remain silent in the Churches (1 Cor. 14:34)" that the most conservative evangelical circles have applied to their female members?

<div align="center">Why Narrative?</div>

Why is narrative or storytelling so useful in empowering women to reclaim their self-agency? The National Storytelling Network defines storytelling as the interactive art of using words and actions while revealing the elements and images of a story and engaging listeners in storytelling process. In a word, storytelling is characterized by the following: it involves a two-way interaction between a storyteller and listener; uses words and language whether it is spoken language or body language with actions such as vocalization, physical movement or gesture; presents a story or a narrative, and encourages the active imagination of the listeners.[5] According to Montserrat González, the term narrative created by William Labov and Josh Waletzky coined the term narrative in 1967, importantly, is seen as "a sequence of two or more narrative clauses, that is, a sequence of clauses separated by one or more temporal junctures" rather than linear and constricted concept.[6] Accordingly, narratives are not simply what happens next in the plot and action, but what speakers convey events and experience in word and image form.

For the activities of narratives or stories, human beings are storytellers because human beings as storytellers in that they make accounts to explain events, communicate with other, create relationships, learn values, traditions, culture, and knowledge, and share their lives through story. People begin doing these things in very early childhood,

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[5] Lori L. Silverman, *Wake Me up When the Data Is Over: How Organizations Use Stories to Drive Results* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006), 12–14.

[6] Montserrat González, *Pragmatic Markers in Oral Narrative the Case of English and Catalan*, (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2004), 20.

practically as soon as they learn to speak. People grow up with stories and live stories. That is why stories are inseparable part of human life.[7] Nonetheless, when the concept of *homo narrans*, or storytellers mirrors the experiences and culture of men, the difficulty comes when society accepts that narrative before the question of why someone is not allowed to speak. A famous philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein gives clues to inclusively reformulate and expand the meaning of *homo narrans* that might challenge the men-centered experience and life styles through the concept of 'language game'. The language game "meant to bring into prominence the fact that the speaking of language is part of an activity, or of a form of life"[8] in that languages are changing all the time: some "come into existence and others "become obsolete and get forgotten." All languages have a life and death, and what separates the two is the amount of people speaking that language. In that sense, his language game can be used as a starting point for an interrogation of the ways that are seen as functioning epidemic practices. Language must be allowed to present and represent the world in different ways because the limits of language signify the limits of their world as well as the philosophy.[9] To limit a person's language corresponds to restrict her or his life - the experience, work, and relationships, etc. - according to Wittgenstein. Accordingly, Christian religious educators should seek for

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[7] Donald Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988), 13.

[8] David G. Stern, *Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations: An Introduction* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 108.

[9] Dawn M. Philips, "Complete analysis and Clarification Analysis in Wittgenstein's Tractions," in *The Analytic Turn: Analysis in Early Analytic Philosophy and Phenomenology*, ed. Michael Beaney (London: Routledge, 2007), 166-67.

creative and inclusive approaches to mitigate the tendency to resort to positioning special

kinds of items when they use narratives or stories as educational contents and means to

have a sense of being full, a sense of coming out of a personal and social history, tell

other people about what storytellers have discovered, and about the world, or more

specifically aspects of it.

Any discipline cannot be independent of socio-historical contexts in which it has

developed. The turn to narrative is meaningful in the current context of so-called post-

modernism that drove people to the concomitant lack of faith in grand, master or meta-

narratives. Margaret McClure in her book *Discourse in Educational and Social Research*

summarizes postmodernism as the following:

> We are in a very different world, then, from that proposed by common sense or
> scientific reason, where language merely reflects, or corresponds to, a pre-existing
> reality. This new (ish) world, which is not one but many, it the product of a
> linguistic turn that has speed like a virus through the disciplines of the social
> sciences and the humanities.... (insisting) that truth are textual; that they was we
> see the world is "always already' infected by language.[10]

According to her, people in postmodern society face the realities that boil down to

perplexing conventional ways of operating and revealing distrust in the modern

authorities and systems. Truth, which is not to be confused with facts, is considered

relative rather than absolute or impartial. Morality in postmodern terms operates in the

same fashion. Such characteristics as difference, exclusiveness, marginalization,

particularity, irregularity, and subjectivity, and infinite personal interests were respected

instead of mega narratives based on power dynamics, homogeneity and lack of diversity

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[10] Margaret MacLure, *Discourse in Educational and Social Research* (Philadelphia, PA: Open University, 2003), 4.

of human beings.[11] In regard to narratives, there are many ways to live good or full lives and emphasizes equality of all people, resisting meta-narratives, or grand narratives as "a global or totalizing cultural narrative schema, which orders and explains knowledge and experience" and "a story about something typically characterized by some forms of transcendent and universal truth."[12] All in all, postmodernism has opened up the countless possibilities in the academic settings such as literature, art, philosophy, fiction, and cultural criticism, challenging the underlying assumptions and strategies that have allowed the dominant culture.

Narrative approach to education draws attention to a 'postmodern turn, reflexive turn, and narrative turn' where all of these terms are exchangeable and share the work of "registering a new space" and developing new theories, new methods, and new ways of talking about self and society.[13] Its attempt includes deconstructing the foundational epistemologies and methodologies of conventional research practices, while at the same time making connections with other domains of issues, theories, and praxis in term of interdisciplinary dimensions. Given all of the terms referring to narrative or linguistic turn in theoretical areas, this narrative education orients toward the multiple, connected,

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[11] Robert K. Brewer, *Postmodernism: What You Should Know and Do About It* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 2002), 33-40.

[12] John Stephens and Robyn McCallum, *Retelling Stories, Framing Culture: Traditional Story and Metanarratives in Children's Literature* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1998), 6-7.

[13] MacLure, *Discourse in Educational and Social Research*, 4.

fluid, and flourishing ways so that they go beyond the linear, absolute, and complete results.[14]

The characteristics and inclusive definition of narrative not only reflects the spirit of the age but also enable religions educators to make plausible of their using narratives to challenge power dynamics when they work with the women in Korean congregations. As Jack Zipes underscores, the counter-cultural function of stories enables to "confront the injustices and contradictions of so-called real world" and possibly engender solidarity and hope among disenfranchised classes, and spread awareness of social inequality, the emancipatory spirit among because stories contains.[15] In that sense, narratives are so effective in raising critical consciousness of women in Korean congregations and in rewriting their dangerous stories of struggle, reminding and maintaining emancipatory stories given by Jesus Christ, and thus singing together victory.

With respect to the biblical world, narratives are the most common type of literature or genre in that over forty percent of the Old Testament is narrative and large sections of the New Testament were written in the narrative genre.[16] Narratives are God's stories told for the purpose of conveying a message through people and their problems and situations. Unlike narrative as account of something, biblical narratives are very selective and advisory, considering their purpose is to try to reveal God at work in,

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[14] Susan E. Chase, "Narrative Inquiry: Still a Field in the Making," in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, eds. Norman K Denzin and Yvonna S Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011), 415–16.

[15] Jack Zipes, *The Irresistible Fairy Tale the Cultural and Social History of a Genre* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 20.

[16] Robert H. Stein, *A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible: Playing by the Rules* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 151-52.

with, through, and among God's creation including humans and give lessons helpful for human life. Ultimately, biblical narratives are illustrations to honor and praise God who engages in human life, protects them from a lot of troubles, and work with his/her children.[17] The parables of Jesus "consists of two parts: a picture part, or the story proper, and a reality part, or the comparison to which it is likened." The message that Jesus intended to convey and its various meanings are available to readers when "questions that are appropriate only to nonfictional literary forms such as biblical narrative" should be accompanied with a better understanding of the function of parables.[18] By nature, they directly do neither answer all of theological questions nor teach lessons, but provide insights and direction of how they should act. Above all, story-based parables have an unexpected twist or unexpected ending that draws readers' attention, leaving some space for them to determine the meaning and lesson. Thus, stories are one of the appropriate ways and resources that discern great spiritual truth that Christian women in Korean congregation should be aware of God, communities of faith, and them.

<div align="center">Characteristics and Potential of Narratives</div>

Good teachers or preachers are aware of how a well-created story can capture the imagination of the audience or participants and how effective stories are as a way to open or win their hearts. Those who listen to stories get opportunities to indirectly experience feelings such as sorrow, weakness, happiness, and anger, and reflect on the symbolic or

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[17] Gordon D. Fee and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 3rd ed (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 79.

[18] Stein, *Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible*, 137-38.

metaphoric meaning in their daily life and analyze what they felt and learned from stories based in their concrete context. Every culture holds its identity and passes down the essence of its identity to next generations by encapsulating its history, beliefs, and values in their oral traditions and written sources.[19] With feminist theological eyes, this chapter examines what kinds of functions, potential, and power narratives inherently possess and how such characteristics or potential of narrative can make contributions to fostering women's critical reflection on gendered settings, thus reclaiming their self-agency developing their narrative self.

Identity Formation

There are many critical and productive potential for narratives but narratives affect forming or building bocks of identity of people. It is no wonder that Korean children, especially girls grow up listening to Korean folklores full of gendered directives and domesticity of women, especially girls. The most prominent of these female virtue stories aimed at young girls is *Simchong* story or "The Faithful Daughter," or the blind man's faithful daughter in another version. This pseudo-historical tale has been popularized to Korean girls as much as the stories Cinderella and Snow White, both popularized by Disney in Western countries. This *Simchong* story, a narrative of filial piety in which she volunteers as virgin sacrifice to make money to cure her blind father. She is thrown into the center of a typhoon to conciliate the hysterical Sea King, a gesture that eventually reunites her with her father and restores her father's sight. The Sea King was impressed by her filial piety and selfless devotion so he marries the young woman.

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[19] Jennifer A. Moon, *Using Story: In Higher Education and Professional Development* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 40-46.

The king, who hears the sad story of his new queen, helps her father restore his vision and meet *Shimchung* again. [20]

The *Shimchung* story is used explicitly to teach filial piety of women. This story has been passed down until today, providing a multitude of rhetorical purposes and multi-layered meanings in Korean society. Mia Yun points out that "schemata in this story represent the ways that knowledge is organized as structures of interrelated components which constitute, situations, events, actions, character types, and patterns of behaviors." [21] Most importantly, these schemata also construct gendered elements and their interconnection appears to constitute a coherent unity. Confucian assumptions of patriarchy, preferring sons to daughters, women's unconditional sacrifice and misogyny influence the formation of girls' identity. While girls listen to the folktales like *Shimchung* story over and over, schemata on the basis of key components such as low esteem in family, submissive, complaint, beautiful, nonviolent, obedient, pleasing others, vulnerable, victim ideology or powerless, prize for their sacrifice, giver, self-effacing, dependent, passive etc.-are molded in girls. [22] Korean pastors or even some Christian conservative groups are not willing to use the secular folktales or stories with other religious traditions or folktales for religious activities. Nonetheless, *Shimchung* in the story are very often quoted for her virtues such as selfless sacrifice, devotion, filial piety, and rewards for what she deemed sacrificial behavior. The narrative from the pulpit is to

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[20] Frank Rogers, *Finding God in the Graffiti: Empowering Teenagers through Stories*, Youth Ministry Alternatives (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2011), 121-23.

[21] Sung Ae Lee, "Revisioning Gendered Folktales in Novels by Mia Yun and Nora Okja Keller," *Aian Ethnology* 68, No. 1 (2009): 135.

[22] Ibid., 131-35.

imitate Jesus Christ who died on the cross showing self-sacrificing love. The message is that in order to be a good Christian one must offer personal sacrifice. As this *Shimchung* story is applied to female Christians, it functions to promote and reinforce the practice 'Women's Three Ways to Follow' and the women's silence and submission, robbing them of the fullness and splendor of their spiritual and psychological life in social and congregational setting. The happy ending of *Shimchung* also comes with the troubling message that her sacrifice, selfless love, and nurturing role for father or others is not only rewarded, but also demanded of her as a woman.[23]

The story of *Shimchung*, one of the favorite subjects of Korean children's books, has been heard to young girls at their bed, contributing to forming girls' self-identity with the message that filial piety with selfless sacrifice and love. The images of nurturing mothers and wife are women's virtues or women's way to follow in their whole life, reinforcing the images of filial daughter, selfless woman, and nurturing mother or wife. Korean literature scholars assert that the theme, filial piety played a pivotal role of making the stories survive and hand down to the present in which females appear as protagonists in storylines in patriarchal or androcentric tradition of Korea, suggesting that such storylines need to be explored from complex angles, not just from feminist perspectives.[24] Some stories keep major events or characters in them but the details of them may be different in different cultures or contexts. Importantly, there are variations and alterations by adding some characters to the original *Shimchung* or by modifying the

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[23] Sookmyung Yoja Taehakkyo, *Asian Women* (Seoul: Research Center for Asian Women, Sookmyung Women's University, 1995) 94-96.

[24] Song-mi Yi, "*Sin Saimdang*:The Foremost Woman Painter of the *Choson Dynasty*," Kim-Renaud, *Creative Women of Korea*, 45–50.

ending parts but "the girl is still gullible, she is till devoured in bed by a wolf ... she is

rescued by a man who aids her in her helpless state."[25] The development of this story that

Shimchung becomes the queen of the powerful king in a reward of sacrifice for her father

confines women's role and creates social practices, stereotypes, taken-for-granted

paradigms, and public rhetoric in their daily basis, in which women are relegated to

trivial, inferior, and dependent beings.[26] One faces the following questions: why should

the one who makes a selfless sacrifice or nurtures the one's parents or family members be

the women or girls not men or boys? Why on earth cannot women free themselves from

such restraints and stereotypes in even stories filled with imaginations?

If one believes that narratives become identity and women's identity has been

damaged by oppression and lack of self-agency, one may repair the damaged identity by

reinventing or retelling new versions of the story to themselves and to others.[27] The

proposition of a feminist theologian Valerie Saiving needs to be paid attention to take the

first step to transform women's damaged identity. She focuses on much more than the

linking of her identity to theological perspectives and why gender matters when it comes

to identity formation of people. She in her article, "The Human Situation: A Feminine

View" observes that girls have just to wait until they become adults while boys are asked

to keep proving that they are men or adult. It means that boys keep doing something to

become an adult, meet the requirements seen as men's work and responsibility, moving

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[25] Rogers, *Finding God in the Graffiti*, 113-15.

[26] Sun Sil Lee Sohng, "A Critical Feminist Inquiry in a Multicultural Conext," in *Korean American Women: From Tradition to Modern Feminism*, eds. Young I. Song and Ailee Moon (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 18.

[27] Ibid., 18–20.

forward but girls get locked in passive being, and wait until they become adult without preparation.[28] The *Shimchung* story and the claim of Valerie are related to share the Cinderella syndrome or complex coined by Colette Dowling. The Cinderella syndrome or complex refers to:

> personal, psychological dependence-the deep wish to be taken care of by others-is the chief force holding women down today. The Cinderella Complex- a network of largely repressed attitudes and fears that keeps women in a kind of half-light, retreating from the full use of their minds and creativity. Like Cinderella, women today are still waiting for something external to transform their lives."[29]

In a word, it is the conscious or unconscious wish to escape responsibility and the tendency of young women to want to be cared by others and give up their independence. This phenomenon comes from stereotypical roles and sexist repression, and women's basic fear of challenging these norms, encouraging girls to wait for someone who takes care of them and discouraging them to be an independent self. It is strong argument as to why women, in spite of gains made through feminism, are still mistakenly willing to let a man take care of them.[30]

Where can girls or women learn the challenges and joys of beings an independent and free person? Where can they have increased self-awareness for greater possibilities living beyond their perceived limitation that women have inherited from patriarchal cultures? How can girls build their identity with self-assertion and independence when Christian theologies define sin as self-assertion and love with selfish, pride and will-to-

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[28] Valerie Saiving, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," in *Womanspirit Rising: A Feminist Reader in Religion,* eds. Carol P. Christ and Judith Plaskow(San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 25.

[29] Rosalyn M. Meadow, ed., *Women's Conflicts about Eating and Sexuality: The Relationship between Food and Sex,* Haworth Women's Studies (New York: Harrington Park Press, 1992), 136–37.

[30] Ibid.

power over them, and social and personal narratives prescribe unconditional sacrifice? One needs to pay attention to the accounts of Valerie who points out that this understanding of sin cannot be applicable to women's sin, because it is developed based on the assumption that men represent human beings. Thus, the problems of women to be addressed are their "triviality, distractibility, and diffuseness; lack of an organizing center of focus; dependence on others for one's self-definition; tolerance at the experience of excellence. In short, underdevelopment or negation of the Self."[31]

As one observed how narratives or folktales shape personal identity, narratives also refer to the self and one's identity. Every woman not only has a story but also has a right to speak their stories. A woman's self is open to change. Narratives can be the means to raise awareness, to amplify their voices, to speak those experiences that have yet to be told, to challenge deeply entrenched narratives of privileged sexist norms, to promote the margins and aid women in retelling their own stories beyond dominant culture and patriarchal power, and rendering stories unanalyzed as reflections of subjectivities or presentations of their own voices.[32] Therefore, when one is asked to tell their life story based on their experience and knowledge, she or he is able to create his or her identity within temporary time.

Transgression

Progressive educators such as Paulo Freire and bell hooks place the emphasis on the engagement and conscientization or raising consciousness of the social marginalized

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[31] Valerie, "The Human Situation," Christ and Plaskow, *Womanspirit Rising*, 37.

[32] Laurel Richardson, "Poetic Representation of Interviews," in *Postmodern Interviewing*, eds. Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2003), 190–91.

in their pedagogical work. The aim of education that they seek for is the social

marginalized to become independent subjects in their society, because to be human is to

be the subject. Their emancipatory and critical pedagogy can be applied to assist women

in Korean congregations in transforming and retelling their dangerous memories of

suffering into those of resistance and freedom. When a society keeps passing from

generation to generation the template based in such ideology as women's

underrepresentation submission, inferiority, dependence, and gender stereotype of

women, how one can break the mind set of 'take-it-for granted?'

According to bell hooks, the testimonies and stories of what women have

experienced- oppression, exploitation, struggles- can be "such fertile ground for the

production of liberatory feminist theory"[33] because their experience provide the energy

and passion to transgress the border of the gendered contexts that create the Cinderella

complex, the template of men's representation and women's underrepresentation, and

block the flow of emancipatory energy to maintain status quo. Whenever women try to

transgress the borders and boundaries of their social identity imposed by patriarchal

power for years, the response is an attempt to get things back to normal as quickly as

possible. For instance, Pope Pius XII addressed that he hopes "for the good of the family,

women would not exercise all their new-found rights."[34] His statement is an example that

happens within this the border where churches and society with patriarchal tendency

relegate women only to motherhood as well as lock the doors into the public sphere that

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[33] bell hooks, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 70.

[34] Christine E. Gudorf, "Encountering the Other:The Modern Papcy on Women," in *Change in Official Catholic Moral Teachings*, ed. Charles E. Curran (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 269.

might allow women leadership, independence, and a viable voice capable of changing hierarchical structures. Motherhood can be regarded as one of women's self-actualizations. Linking women only to motherhood never permits women to rework their self and to cultivate relationships, communicate, and create bonds outside of this identity.[35]

The attempts to enclose women to a long-lived stereotypes or traditional roles can be analyzed in the banking concept of education. The banking education is a metaphor used by Paulo Freire in which students are viewed as an empty bank account that is open to deposits made by teachers. In the system, learners are demanded to cram knowledge to get good grades while teachers exercise their power and authority over students as if teachers are oppressors and students the oppressed. Scarily, this dualistic, hierarchical context fosters the fatalism that leads women to negate the spirit of questioning, believing that the world is a given so one can only submit to it.[36] In the banking system of education, knowledge is a present given "by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing. Projecting an absolute ignorance unto others, a characteristic of the ideology of oppression negates education and knowledge as processes of inquiry."[37] Therefore, this kind of education functions to acquiesce to the cultural ideology in which women are restricted to the personal, individual, domestic and non-public sphere and to abandon aspirations to change their

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[35] Deborah Burand, "Women as Leaders in International Microfinance," in *Gender and Women's Leadership: A Reference Handbook*, ed. Karen O'Connor (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2010), 435-36.

[36] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans., Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Seabury Press, 1970), 71-80.

[37] Ibid., 72.

reality though what they go through is oppressive things. When the narratives are filled with the Cinderella syndrome or the template women=mothers, these stories are deposited in their bank accounts. Then, they cannot find a way to transgress the borders surrounded by the patriarchal pattern.

The "problem-posing education" as opposed to the banking system education acknowledges human incompleteness as well as highlights such principles as dialogue, cooperation, and real partnership between learners and facilitators, and theory-praxis or praxis-theory. This pedagogical process brings concretization, a term coined by Freire, to learners or participants. Through this process, people engage in the dialectical relationships through reflection, action, and transformation of reality. Freire's educational model focusing on dialogue, conscientaization, and practice can be used in discussions of critical reflection, pushing women to engage in the process of constructing, deconstructing, reconstructing the taken-for-granted stereotypes imposed by outsiders. Thus, the conscientization that he suggests is an effective tool to counter the domestication of any forms of meta-narratives and to represent the voices that have been not presented.[38] By helping women to discern how they have been socialized and internalized as the others and strangers, they strive to find their self-justification to transgress or break the border filled with domestication and power dynamics and thus reclaim their agency and dignity.

Freire's conscientization and dialogue model resonate with the educational themes raised by bell hooks. hooks stresses that education must be a process of self-actualization and a practice of freedom where people can dream for a more egalitarian

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[38] Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* 77-91.

society and the reception of cultural plurality. The education that hooks develops is a way to let women speak or confess what they know with their own voices and enhance their capacity to live fully and deeply as human subjects. Without engaging in the journey of self-realization, women are immersed in the rituals of control exercised by domination. Accordingly, hooks proposes the act of speech or a gesture of defiance resulting from live experience stories of the oppressed, the colonized, and the exploited as productive resources and ground for creation of liberatory feminist theory[39] that empowers them to stand out of and struggle with their oppressive suffering and brings about healing and new life and new growth.

'Talking back' "is no mere gesture of empty words, that is the expression of our movement from object to subject-liberated voice,"[40] becomes their voice be heard. In order that women achieve the journey of their "talking back," an act of women's self-actualization, they need safe spaces where they can openly engage in conversation, and can welcome their speaking voices based on their own experience. Speaking is not a solitary devotion or expression but a political one[41] that serves as challenging and transforming the patriarchal power that asks women to remain silent and submissive, disallowing women's talking back to sexist systems. What women dare to speak in a liberatory voice might threaten even those who may initially claim to want their words. In the act of overcoming our fear of speech, of being seen as threatening, in the process of learning to speak as a subject, they participate in the global struggle to end domination.

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[39] bell hooks, *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (Boston: South End Press, 1989), 22–25.

[40] Ibid., 9.

[41] Ibid., 40.

When they end our silence, when they speak in a liberated voice, their words connect us with anyone, anywhere who lives in silence.[42] That is how talking back as a political act allows women to counter silence as a strategy of resistance, a result of their skepticism or distrust of the society's commitment to the imbalanced power dynamic. Here women are able to critically reflect on their dangerous stories of experience with oppression.

The story of the Canaanite woman (Mat 15:22-28) is an illustration that shows how women's talking-back as a political act transgresses the traditional stereotype and sexist contexts.[43] It also can be as a good example to let Korean Christian women to know how the social marginalized can respond to and resist unequal inclusion. Who else in the scripture has talked back to Jesus like her? She is a Canaanite woman in the middle of a group of Jewish men. She is so out of place and out of time and so exactly where her daughter needs him to be. She screams and shouts to ask for help from Jesus. Jesus answers "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house (15:24)...It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs (15:24)." Readers or even Christians are so embarrassed that Jesus would call anyone a dog, repeating that God just takes care of God's children. She comes with their logic to persuade Jesus (15:27): "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." Jesus who was impressed by her faith replies that "great is your faith (15:28)."

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[42] hooks, *Talking Back*, 18.

[43] hooks, *Teaching to Transgress*, 152.

She is "portrayed as accepting the social category of a dog assigned to her and as agreeing to stay under the table and pick up crumbs."[44] She does not care about naming her as a dog who has comes to "follow, beg, and depend on" her master for her daughter' healing.[45] Elizabeth Schussler finds in the story of this Canaanite woman the "emancipatory grassroots democratic ethos" or the interpretation strategy or tool that empowers women to sense the patriarchal intentions and creates conciseness of transformation through the awareness that all injustice is interconnected, and power struggles play out.[46] Korean Christian women have struggled against anonymousness, exclusion, ignorance, and the sense of the powerlessness in their congregations but they never gave up their faith in God and in the ethical values that are associated with God given the situation that women make up 70 percent of the memberships. Therefore, religious educators need to further study what makes them keep their faith in the face of such an overt exclusion and ignorance, and how their passionate resilience can be transformed into energy to overcome the patriarchal grasp.

Reflexivity or A Process of Becoming

Reflexivity is one of major sources of the self-agency. Viktor Grecas defines reflexivity as:

"to the capacity of humans to be bother subjects ("I") and objects ("me") to themselves, to reflect on themselves, and act toward themselves as objects." Reflexivity enables a wide ranged of self-objectification processes, such as self-

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[44] Musa W. Dube Shomanah, *Postcolonial Feminist Interpretation of the Bible* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 151.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Wisdom Ways: Introducing Feminist Biblical Interpretation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), 81.

evaluation, self-control, self-criticism, self-motivation. Reflexivity, therefore, is the foundation for numerous, more specific manifestations of the self-agency."[47]

Thus, reflexivity is linked to the concepts of self-agency, and self-fulfilling prophecies in that self-agency, positive thinking, and optimism often served up additional energy among the people working together and resulted in a positively charged self-fulfilling prophecy as they behave toward new people in their lives-in ways that reproduce, old, negative relationships.

Leslie Bloom sees reflexivity as individuals' experience or " journey of becoming"[48] in people's lives. When it comes with women, they are able to engage what they call the 'non-unitary' subjectivities or the various and competing roles such as subjectivities or identities through the process of reflexivity; they are able to have positive self-images with evolving, developing, newly interpreting beings rather than beings locking in stereotype and just waiting to be female adults without planning and preparing their future. "When women are deprived of narrative conventions that allow them complex identity and self-representation, they are deprived of power" so that women's narratives generally contain many subplots, complexities, turns, and often contain no clear climax or neat resolution summing them up.[49] In the same vein, reflexivity of narratives demands a constant quality of vigilance and an ability to live with doubts and self-doubt-above all. Self-doubt means to doubt one's most valued

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[47] Viktor Grecas, "Self-Agency and the Life Course," in *Handbook of the Life Course*, eds. Jeylan T. Mortimer and Michael J. Shanahan (New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2003), 370.

[48] Leslie Rebecca Bloom, *Under the Sign of Hope: Feminist Methodology and Narrative Interpretation* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), 65.

[49] Bloom, *Under the Sign of Hope*, 67-68.

possessions so that people get motivated to weave their rich textiles of memories based on those doubts.

Accordingly, it is important for women to make their stories critical events or incidents in their retelling stories. According to Wester and Mertova, their 'critical' stories are such events that have remarkable impact on the storytellers and that bring the change or transformation of their experience, whether such changes are positive or negative. Their stories "unplanned, unanticipated, and uncontrolled" can be viewed as 'critical' and thus their experience and emotional state are respected when they speak about their lived experience.[50] Then, as Bloom asserts, women's narratives will not follow a traditional androcentric structure with stereotypes for women but they might present themselves as the heroes or important persons in their telling or retelling stories because "critical events are critical because of their impact and profound effect on whoever experiences such an event."[51]

Carol Hess discusses eating disorders, or anorexia among young women in terms of reflexivity. The young women with eating disorders imply their denying and submission. Eating disorder is conceptualized and explored within a reflexive narrative approach, where narrators who suffer from eating disorders tell stories constructed around routines of body control and discipline and are asked to engage in reflexive identity work for a continuous construction of coherence and interpersonal commitment in new contexts. Herein, faith communities need to create a safe place where young

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[50] Leonard Webster, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method: An Introduction to Using Critical Event Narrative Analysis In Research on Learning and Teaching* (London: Routledge, 2007), 77.

[51] Ibid.

women can be their whole selves and instruct the fact their bodies are the temples that God resides in, recognizing that greater gender equality can lead to a reduction in negative body image and eating disorder.[52] Importantly, young women and congregations realize commitment to the values about caring and being cared for in terms of justice and authentic love.

Consequently, reflexivity or critical reflection encourages Korean Christian women to recall, deconstructs their particular life with dangerous memories of exclusion and suffering, reconstructing their real experience stories to assist researchers and storytellers in understanding or discovering, and reflecting who they are and what they think about. Then, reflexivity as the process of becoming is not only to make sense of narrative as an approach, but to position critical analysis as a tool that can help substantively ground it.

Liminality

How can the concept of the liminal space be helpful in respect with Korean Christian women's development? This can be a difficult time because one can feel unsettled, uncertain, and insecure in this space. Liminal (from Latin *limen*) refers to "a threshold, chasm, or margin.[53] Liminal agents can experience wonder, shock, perplexity and uneasiness, uncertainty and unsettlement in the liminality or liminal space viewed as an in-between place-neither here nor there. Lee Jung-young pays attention to how the liminal space can be applied and activated to marginal people. To be marginal is to be in

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[52] Carol Lakey Hess, *Caretakers of Our Common House: Women's Development in Communities of Faith* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 132-35.

[53] Jung Young Lee, *Marginality: The Key to Multicultural Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 152-53.

the peripheries, where their voice is not heard and their beings are ignored so the marginalized experience being invisible, of nobody really knowing who they really are. When the marginalized are led into the liminal space or between place-neither here nor there, this time or place can be a reversal to them. That is, this liminality as marginality can be a very humbling experience that empowers them to choose one.[54] Koreans are used to this liminal place or liminality though this has rarely been presented to them. For instance, when Christianity as a Western religion was imported to Korea, Koreans were exposed to the liminal space between the imported Western religion and other indigenous religions. Korean Christians who encountered the liminal space had to get through with the existential, contextual, and theological questions, bringing a lot of positive and negative transformations to Korean Confucian society.

Whether one negatively or positively sees the liminal, or between, or interstitial manifestations depends on persons, but some scholars such as Homi Bhabha and Jung Young Lee look at this on positive and creative ways. The liminal space with the concepts such as ambivalence, hybridity, and Third Space has arisen within postcolonial studies. The term hybridity has been most recently associated with Homi Bhabha. Bhabha demonstrates the interdependence of colonizers and the colonized. All cultural systems and statements are constructed in what he calls the 'Third Space.'[55] Clearly, it is hard to find what one calls the inherent purity or originality of cultures in this world, so Bhabha recommends to perceive this space as an attempt to open up the notion of an

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[54] Lee, *Marginality*, 61.

[55] Homi K. Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences," in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* eds., Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006) 157.

inter/national or inter/personal culture "not based on exoticism or multiculturalism of the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity."[56] In brining this to the next stage, what Bhabha wants to emphasize is that people find words or language to accept diversity, negotiate differences, and elude the polarity between 'you and we' through and within the 'Third Space.'[57]

As Bhabha proposes this liminal space as the harmony of difference, Korean American theologian, Jung Young Lee also impressively develops into a paradigm where "a new marginal person can be a reconciler and a wounded heart to the two-category system" and their liminal stage can be the place of creative minority, who can become catalysts to transform the world."[58] In-between serves as transforming centrality to marginality and marginality to new marginality rather than dualistic model 'either or' and 'neither nor' as centralist people understand or the oriental philosophy, 'yin and yang' paradigm[59] that feminists regard as the root of gendered principles.

One can find biblical figures who are exposed to the liminal space. For instance, Moses is a good model that demonstrates Lee's definition of liminal space. Moses in Median was just a lowly shepherd of sheep that belonged to neither here nor there. He was on the margin, in the transitional time, or in a liminal space. His in-between status came from his situation in the boundaries of the Midianite, Hebrew, and Egyptian

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[56] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 56.

[57] Ibid., 53-56.

[58] Lee, *Marginality*, 63.

[59] Men Jiuzhang and Guo Lei, eds., *A General Introduction to Traditional Chinese Medicine* (Boca Raton, FL: Science Press/CRC Press, 2010), 61. Yin and Yang is one of the most fundamental concepts in the oriental philosophy. *Yin* refers to as 'female, passive, negative principle in nature: the moon: shaded orientation while *yang* 'male, positive, active in nature: river and sunny side.

cultures. After he mysteriously encountered the divine 'I am who I am' (Ex 3:14) at the burning bush, his transformation became complete. With the return to Egypt indicating a possibility, the marginal or liminal life became saturated with a transitional, but creative and transformative state between the Egyptian adopted prince and the Israelite national leader with prophetic calling.[60]

The liminal quality in narrative pedagogy functions as taking one from the threshold of one experience to another. Susan Broadhurst defines the liminal space for storytelling as a site in which good stories are able to transport into the narrative world. Participants can use their own experience of the world to bridge the gaps in the text or good stories, and thus new creative potentials can be found that led to the transformation of their location as well as context through healing of wound and reconciliation.[61] The liminal space of stories can be considered to bring to women not only conflicts, contest, and otherness out of their differences but also possibly the understanding of their particularities with healthy criticism. In that sense, Christian religious educators need to seek the ways of how liminal space or liminality that stories might provide can be used to help Korean Christian women have dangerous memories of resistance against patriarchal power and subjectively rework their self beyond their invisibility, faceless, and nameless.

Imagination

Liminality is related to imagination in that imagination makes it possible transformation of centrality to marginality and marginality to new marginality. What if

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[60] Athena E. Gorospe, *Narrative and Identity: An Ethical Reading of Exodus 4* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 288-95.

[61] Susan Broadhurst, *Liminal Acts: A Critical Overview of Contemporary Performance and Theory* (London: Cassell, 1999), 17-18.

there was no such thing as imagination? Without human imagination modern

conveniences - medicines, medical science, technology, civilization, religion, and art, etc.

- might not have been available. Human imagination has allowed humans to reach out

beyond the very limited animal world into a vast new universe, to discover and interact

with the wonders of nature by inventing new verbal languages, innovations, art, stories,

religions, and writing. In relation to narratives or stories, Martha Nussbaum regards

narrative imagination as allowing people to think what "it might be like to be in the shoes

of a person different from oneself... The narrative imagination is not uncritical, for we

always bring ourselves and our own judgments to the encounter with another."[62] In that

sense, narrative imagination has the potential to cultivate the minds of people, enabling

them to make judgment when they make their own choices and wishes, and promote

courage to act on what individuals have learned or what they were taught to believe. If

the imagination fosters the construction of inner eyes with which women are able to

penetrate their physical realities and world and the invisible power to transform the

current world filled with stereotypes of women,[63] they can dream for a female pope

through the liminal space that stories are able to set side though Catholic church does not

allow a female pope. Imagination does not stand the status quo. Rather, imagination

allows one to keep an open mind, so that promoting powers of imagination is one of the

major tasks in religious education, especially when its pedagogical focus goes to self-

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[62] Martha Craven Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997), 10.

[63] Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity*, 10-13.

agency and subjectivity of human beings, and conscientize women in patriarchal society that might tend to maintain the statue quo.

Mary Elizabeth Moore calls attention to imagination as one of essential resources in developing the organic religious education, whose aim is to reduce the gap between education and theology and theory and practice through the dialogues between each other. Narrative teaching is the one of various organic approaches to religious education that Moore introduces. Her narrative pedagogy, stories or narratives are used as contents as well as a means to connect theology with educational practices and embrace theology as an investigation of biblical symbols and education as the incorporation of the intellectual, physical, and emotional.[64] It is imagination that plays a critical role in harmonizing different disciplines, various experiences and dream for the ideal pictures of another world, sensing that this imperfect world is neither the end of her or his life nor the only one, which she or he can inhabit.[65]

On the other hand, Thomas Groom links the meaning of imagination with the power to offer the freedom to conceive the world in new ways and undertake forms of action that might bring transformation. For the purpose of religious education for the reign of God, for Christian faith, for human freedom, imagination is the faculty to emancipate humans from dominant ideologies and thus encompasses a vision of social justice. Groome looks on this transformation through his shared Christian praxis model. It has five movements: conversation, cooperation, relationship, and formation in a social

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[64] Mary Elizabeth Moore, *Teaching from the Heart: Theology and Educational Method* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 2.

[65] Moore, *Teaching from the Heart*, 141.

consciousness that "encourages critical reflection and questioning of the social/political context" and thus fosters creative imagination what they should do for their present and future.[66] The shared praxis model seeks for action through the dialectic between church stories and learners or participants' stories, so that the Church identifies the impetus within praxis for ongoing praxis and theoretical, practical, and productive expressions of action, social imagination and reflection.

Like Groom, in light of radical manifestations, Walter Brueggemann proposes prophetic ministry, which is fueled by prophetic imagination that creates and nurtures alternative communities. The prophetic ministry proposed by him is characterized by two actions: criticizing and energizing. "Prophetical criticism is not carping and denouncing. It is asserting that false claims to authority and power cannot keep their promises, which they could not in the face of the free God."[67] Jesus is the epitome of this prophetic ministry and imagination. Jesus embodies these aspects of prophetic critique, energizing his own life and ministry by being his death (criticism) and resurrection (energizing). Prophetic ministry "consists in offering an alternative perception of reality and in letting people see their own history in the light of god's freedom and his will for justice."[68] Thus, prophetic ministry nurtures and nourishes people to follow the path that Jesus walked through, providing an alternative vision and bringing about hope where oppression and injustice need not continue forever as Jesus commands his disciples and followers to do. When the prophetic imagination is fostered in people, they come to

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[66] Thomas H. Groome, *Sharing Faith: A Comprehensive Approach to Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry: The Way of Shared Praxis* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 134-38.

[67] Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 11.

[68] Ibid., 116.

experience the power of God to liberate from the consequences of their own sins. They awaken an alternative consciousness that criticizes the premises of dominant cultures and the consumer oriented society. They get to an ultimate destination that is a renewal of the original communion between God, children of God, and long for the new world or heaven as holistic and healthy community of faith.[69] Imagination is not a just static ability but broadly ranges from critical and perceptive intelligences, moral responsibility, to the sense of wonder as Rogers views the prophetic imagination that Brueggemann argues as what is manifest in the liminal space "where the sacred resides" and where one challenges the silence of God and poses questions about suffering full of this world to introduce hope.[70]

To Maria Harris, "teaching is an act not only of the imagination, but of the religious imagination."[71] The imagination in her teaching functions as connecting divinity to humanity and the ordinary to extraordinary and bringing form, shape and embodiment to people through the work of remembering, ritual morning and artistry. Simply, teaching is not a way to "make believe" about something, but can be a sacred act or "religiously imaginative act" that enables one to believe and "to save and to redeem"[72] in her teaching. The "religiously imaginative act," that assigns value and life to its teaching as religious imagination takes the following forms: contemplative life with active intensity, ascetic experience focused on discipline and discipleship, creative efforts to use the

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[69] Brueggemann, *Prophetic Imagination*, 41.

[70] Rogers, *Finding God in the Graffiti*, 81.

[71] Maria Harris, *Teaching and Religious Imagination: An Essay in the Theology of Teaching* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 3.

[72] Ibid.

potential in the service of one another and the world, and sacramental witness as the sign of God's presence and power in the lives of people.[73] The religiously imaginative act is characterized by the mysterious, numinous, and mystery of art. The *mystical* refers to sense, belief, and conviction that one can know something but not everything. The *numinous* means humans are aware when the presence of the Sacred comes to them. The *mystery* refers to the other or supernatural about which they can never know. The divinity of art is weighed in her religious teaching but humans as artistes are invited to access the sacred inspiration and engage in the wonder and awe that mystical, numinous, and mysterious Sprit forms and reforms.[74] The religious imaginative act as mystical, numinous, and mysterious power or awe is not measured or explored in scientific ways.

Her focus goes to teaching as a religiously imaginative act whose broad or inclusive images are revealed as incarnation, revelation, and the grace that give power, and recreation as she defines religious teaching in her thesis:

> Teaching, where seen as an activity of religious imagination, is the incarnation of subject matter in ways which (or in order to) reveal subject matter so that subject, in communion with each other, are able to exercise power: the capacity and act to act receptively intelligently, humanly, responsible, and religiously in transforming the universe.[75]

Such concepts as power, discovery, and subjectivity in her religious teaching based on religious imagination are developed and practiced in her discussion of curriculum. Harris elaborates explicit, implicit, and null curricular based on the insights

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[73] Harris, *Teaching and Religious Imagination,* 21-25.

[74] Maria Harris, "Art and Religious Education: A Conversation," *Religious Education* 83, no. 3 (June 1988): 455-56.

[75] Harris, *Teaching and Religious Imagination,* 88.

from Elliot Eisner in respect to the nurturing of imagination inherent in humans. The null

curriculum for the awareness of spiritual life expands and deepens the faculty of

imagination in educational process. The explicit curriculum implies what leaders

intentionally organize and plan in their educational context. It is easy for both facilitators

and participants to expect what they do because of explicit subject matters, contexts, and

educational goals or intentions. The implicit or hidden curriculum is defined as "the

patterns or organizations or procedures that frame the explicit curriculum"[76] that emerge

incidentally from interaction between facilitators and participants. Harris offers how to

encourage women to develop an awareness of their spiritual life. The null curriculum

consists of what is not taught and is basically the unwritten rules or the curriculum that is

not mentioned or excluded in worship, the Bible, and other doctrinal work. When hidden

curriculum or implicit curriculum operates in a patriarchal context, it can be used as a

mechanism that perpetuates and reinforces patriarchal power. On the other hand, Harris

figures out the paradox of the null curriculum that "refers to areas left out and procedures

let out. And the point of naming it and including it here is critical: ignorance is not

neutral."[77] Patriarchal cultures have used implicit and explicit curricular to maintain

andocentric cultures and reinforce sexist practices and customs so significantly, women

in that context need to detect the meaning of implicit curriculum imposed by andocentric

and gendered practices and spirit.

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[76] Maria Harris, *Fashion Me a People: Curriculum in the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989), 68.

[77] Harris, *Fashion Me a People*, 63-71.

Pointing out that the null curricular might have been used as resources to maintain andocentric cultures and women's exclusion from leadership positions and self-denigration, Harris contends that recovering spirituality of women might be a way to nurture the inner life or self, and to wake them up to take care of themselves rather than in favor of giving themselves to others. Spiritually growing up is not easy to those who have wrested with growth but Harris highlights that "increased vulnerability meets with deepened awareness"[78] to find a new life. She invites women to dance the spirit through what she calls seven steps (See the footnotes).[79] In noticing the implicit curriculum that insidiously intends to refuse women's self-agency and representation by trivializing the resources out of their live experience stories and thoughts, various discourses regarding imaginative power and dynamic elaborated by Moore, Groome, Walter Brueggemann, and Harris might be one of the ways to bring gender inclusive transformation to Korean Christian women and their congregations.

Therapeutic Ethos

Much has been said of the potentials and strengths of narratives and storytelling as contents as well as methodology of narrative pedagogy. Narratives have the potentiality to enhance growth of imagination, reduce tension or stress, foster the critical reflection, and moreover, to motivate the perception and desire to transform and

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[78] Maria Harris, *Dance of the Spirit: The Seven Steps of Women's Spirituality* (New York: Bantam Books, 1989), 13.

[79] Harris, *Dance of the Spirit.* Awakening, Dis-Covering, Creating, Dwelling, Nourishing, Traditioning, and Transforming. In the stage of awakening, women are invited that "there is another reality"(p. 13):Dscovering refers to remembering their past(p. 34). In the stage of dwelling, they create the space to encounter with the spirit(p. 86); in the stage of Nourishing, they get nurtured with spiritual teachings and practices (p. 152); Traditioning is to care and teach others(p. 153);in the last stage of Transforming, women are encouraged to contribute to the well-beings of the universe(p. 188).

challenge by touching the heart of participants. Storytelling has the function for pain-control, or self-exploration and self-therapy for women, because by telling their own stories, it enables them to let accumulated grudges or anguish go and see their inner self.

"Storytelling, you know, has a real function. The process of the storytelling is itself a healing process, partly because you have someone there who is taking."[80] This comes from Alice Walker Pulitzer Prize winning author. It explains why storytelling is the process of healing or the act of storytelling is also healing itself because it gives a voice to the lost and silent who have hidden fears and hurts that often underlie and can contribute to or even cause the development of many physical and psychological problems. Above all, stories might suggest a variety of solutions and inspire hope that change is possible.[81] With the healing effect that narratives provides, emotional dimensions of stories are of special importance. In this section, how crying, a uniquely human form of emotional expression is good in terms of healing and therapeutic approach will be examined.

People also live with stories that make them laugh, cry and get angry. It is well known that laughter, for example, has been shown to promote healing, increase blood flow, reduce levels of stress hormones, boost the immune system, and produce more disease-fighting compounds.[82] One is aware well of how humors and laughter bring about positive transformation to her or his physical and psychological state, but less

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[80] Jean Shinoda Bolen, *Crossing to Avalon: A Woman's Midlife Quest for the Sacred Feminine*, 10th Anniversary ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004), vii.

[81] Bolen, *Crossing to Avalon*, 33-35.

[82] Susan M. Stewart, "Laughter:Nature's Healing Refrain," in *Healing with Art and Soul Engaging One's Self through Art Modalities*, ed. Kathy Luethje (Newcastle upon Tyne, UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 175.

attention is often paid to how good crying with tears can be for one's self. William Frey

elaborates crying with tears than just physical stimuli, like yearning or onion fumes

brings about recovery and gets the body in balance after a stressful event by letting it go,

stressing humans are the only animals to evolve this ability to shed tears in response to

emotional stress. That is why people may feel better after crying when they are literally

crying it out. Scientific studies prove that harmful chemicals that build up during

emotional stress may be removed in their tears when they cry, and decrease the risk of

heart attack and problems in relation to brain.[83]

Its therapeutic effect is related to a hormone, prolactin that affects tears, stress,

and immune system. In general, women produce this hormone much more than men, and

its levels rise during pregnancy, when the frequency of crying among women also

increases. Accordingly, crying or weeping may become a useful therapy for some people

who have difficulty expressing their emotions.[84] In spite of that, it has not been accepted

for men, even little boys to cry in patriarchal cultures that proscribe certain types of

expressions like crying or tears for men and associate with powerfulness, sensitive and

weak persons, conflict with assertions of masculinity, and rates crying of women

positively.[85] Therefore, the practice of crying that is good for the soul, for healing, for

one's physical and psychological well-being as a natural function of the human organism,

a sexist and patriarchal claim that perpetuates masculinity as the stronger of a dualistic

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[83] A. J. J. M. Vingerhoets, *Why Only Humans Weep: Unravelling the Mysteries of Tears* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 78-110.

[84] Ibid., 192-94.

[85] Tom Lutz, *Crying: The Natural and Cultural History of Tears* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1999), 106-07.

paradigm of gender in relation to emotional performance like crying or laughter should be avoided.

On the basis of their healing power of story, women who cry while telling their life stories is a good sign for them to start entering into the recovery or therapeutic process.

Erick H. Meade presents how fairy tales can be healing or therapeutic resources for storytellers and for those who listen to stories. Stories allow for strong emotional provocation and identification that gives less painful and more enriching experience, helping let conflict and painful memory go and thus storytellers come to know how to separate themselves from their problems and offer new perspectives. Stories also teach how to accept their emotions and how to come to terms with duality, ambivalence and strife to move toward a philosophical perspective on life. Developing interpersonal dynamics and internal dynamics and modeling alternative attitudes and stances which help people cope with hardship and forge new paths also is helpful in demonstrating a capacity to accommodate manifold interpretations, morals, and meanings. Such potentials of stories lead women or the participants in stories to embracing and conveying the sacred stories.[86]

Healing or therapy cannot be performed without an awareness of being touched by something else. Touching the heart of listeners or narrators is one of the strengths of narrative pedagogy. Christians or students might not remember the curricular that they were taught, but impressions from the stories that make a difference in their lives might

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[86] Erica Helm Meade, *Tell It by Heart: Women and the Healing Power of Story* (Chicago: Open Court, 1995), 244-47.

linger in their mind. As Erica demonstrated, Christians are able to build friendship, trust, compassion, and practice the teachings of Jesus who asks them to walk the extra miles and share their clothing with. Then, they are willing to walk the extra mile for those in need and be the real Samaritan in their lives. Women need courage to challenge the template of women's underrepresentation and misogyny as heroic women like Shiphrah and Puah (Ex 1:5-22) and Miriam in Exodus 2:1-10 who aided Moses to fulfill his commitment by connecting her brother who might die without her quick action to the Egyptian princess.[87] Women will learn how to accept and trust them by internalizing the Canaanite woman who was not afraid of talking back and disobeying the systematic practices to push her to shut up based on her ethnicity, gender, and class rather than just Jesus' teaching (Mt 15:21-28).

Repeatedly, narrative pedagogy must be a teaching from the heart by Elizabeth Moore. It puts weight on rich metaphors, images, symbols, creative imagination, and continuous renewal rather than goal-oriented success or judgmental competition. Harris' religious education as religious imagination also is a part of narrative pedagogy in that aesthetic, holistic beauty and the achievement of justice, peace, and equality are viewed as one of her educational goal and fruits. To Thomas Groome, religious education is to stimulate the deep passion and the caring for the well being of those who have most often been ignored or forgotten in the power dynamics, and empowers to construct stories in action.

Taken it all together, narratives are so appealing and effective for fostering full development of women active in Korean communities of faith in that narratives provide

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[87] Mary Zimmer, *Sister Images* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 20-21.

opportunities for self-reflexivity in which women are encouraged to revisit dangerous stories and memories of exclusion, selfless, voiceless, sacrificial, submissive and oppressive suffering. Narratives guide them into liminal space where women look at their authentic identity as a woman, Korean, and Christian. It is a space where they negotiate between emancipation given by Jesus Christ and submissive state being imposed by patriarchal cultures. Women are still under patriarchal power but can equip themselves to move the direction that leans away from the side filled with submission, dependency, marginality, and selflessness to the other side seeking for subjectivity, self-agency, resilience, provocation of their own voice, and emancipation. Narratives fully use such faculties of imagination and critical reflection to envision the *Kin-dom* of God where women are empowered to proclaim that "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28). Finally, narratives help them find their own ways to heal women and others, restore their brokenness, have hope and courage in the midst of despair, discern their real life values and subjectivity, cultivate spiritual life, and transform ordinary into extraordinary

Chapter Four

On the Way to Women's Self-Agency Or Narrative Self

We have explored such issues as self-agency and independence of Korean

Christian females. In the first chapter, it was shown how Korean feminist theologians and

feminist activists have worked hard to enhance women's social status in their societies as

well as congregations. In the second chapter, narrative pedagogy was proposed as one

way to nurture women's self-agency in that narratives and storytelling have powers and

potentials to enable Korean Christians women to discern their self as the subject of a life-

narrative; empower them to dismantle traditional stereotype and gendered practices, and

reimagine their own stories with feminist lens; foster their spiritual, emotional, and

psychological development. Now, the focus will go on reworking of their self in which

the voluntary, independent, resistant, holistic side will be highlighted through the various

scholarly works.

Necessary and Sufficient Conditions For Constructing the Narrative Self

Susan William argues that feminists call into question the conception of

traditional model of autonomy, the self, and truth on which the modernist model is based,

proposing "a refusal to accept the fundamental interconnectedness and dependency of

human condition,"[1] because gender hierarchy and human objectification are permeated in

those understandings. Accordingly, females need to be cautious of general understanding

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[1] Susan Hoffman Williams, *Truth, Autonomy, and Speech: Feminist Theory and the First Amendment* (New York: New York University Press, 2004), 3.

or ways that have contributed to justifying the traditionally, socially, practically, conceptually, and hierarchically gendered norms or templates based on "the model of imperial masculinity" and "the male authorial narratives" when they have been seen as exemplifying experiences in "relatively interpersonal, subjectivity, immediate ways."[2] Simply constructed, men's speech=representation of humans=autonomy vs. women's silence=subjugation=underrepresentation.[3] Hereby, it is important to be aware of such templates permeated over the patriarch context and how the differences between the sexes in many dimensions have been used as the means to maintain the existing power structure and the status quo of sex discrimination. Namely, when being aware that much of the way carried out in society and the communities of faith is very male dominated so that the voice and experience of women is largely absent, religious Christian educators are able to know the needs of Korean female Christians and nurture them to rework their self who enables to construct meaning for themselves, find their own voices, and reclaim self-agency in their context for family, churches, and society.

Mary Belenky and her colleagues observed through the research on 135 women enrolled in various educational institutions, all of them from the United States that women come to create a presumed knowledge, to shape attitudes, and to sustain embedded power difference in conventional or patriarchal culture and society where women are demanded to keep "conventional feminine goodness" that means being

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[2] Nagihan Haliloğlu, *Narrating from the Margins: Self-Representation of Female and Colonial Subjectivities in Jean Rhys's Novels* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2011), 37.

[3] Williams, *Truth, Autonomy, and Speech*, 3-9.

intellectually voiceless as well as selfless.[4] A recent study found that the personality of

women is related to their parents' attitudes because there were the differences between

parents' respective attitudes toward their sons and their daughters; girls were parented

more considerately by parents than were their brothers. The parents with newborn babies

"hold, play with, and even touch their baby girls differently than they do their baby boys.

Parents rate their new girl babies as more delicate, finer, and softer than they do their boy

babies; newborn these differences in rearing and expectations are based on assigned

gender."[5] Parents' different expectation based on the assigned gender would then lead

boys and girls to be socialized in different ways from their earliest moments of life.

What feminist scholars like Carol Gilligan and Mary Benlenky assert is that since

men have dominated the discussion of moral theory and the male view of individual

rights and rules was considered a higher stage than women's point of view of

development, women's voices and perspectives are not taken seriously. Gilligan

observed the "failure of women to fit existing models of human growth may point to a

problem in the representation, a limitation in the conception of human condition, an

omission of certain truths about life."[6] Women face biased opinions against women that

consider women to be less developed, sophisticated, and inferior to men on the scales that

men develop. As aforementioned, there are discrepancies between females and men and

"these differences justify (or even explain) the social or political subordination of

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[4] Mary Field Belenky, ed., *Women's Ways of Knowing: The Development of Self, Voice, and Mind* (New York: Basic Books, 1986), 71.

[5] Jerrold S. Greenberg, Clint E. Bruess, Debra W. Haffner, *Exploring the Dimensions of Human Sexuality* (Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett, 2000), 392.

[6] Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 2.

women."[7] Namely, Gilligan asserts women have differencing moral and psychological

tendencies than men; men are inclined to think in terms of rules and justice whereas

women in terms of caring and relationship. Therefore, Gilligan calls the two different

moral voices 'the ethic of justice' and 'the ethic of care' respectively. See the bellow

chart[8]:

Female voice emphasizes interdependence (connection) and responsibility for others.	Male voice highlights independence (separation) and responsibility for themselves
Females are invited to be passive recipients.	Males are invited to be active agents.
Females seek solutions based on caring and altruistic in front of problems.	Males are focus on fair and just when they face problems.
Females regard moral misconducts as a failure of communication and responding.	Males see their moral wrongness in terms of justice.
Moral interactions take place at the level of personal relationships for female.	Moral interactions are performed at the level of political and social realms.

Briefly, the ethic of justice refers to such concepts as dignity, expression, personal

liberty, and fairness while the ethic of care such concepts as compassion, empathy, and

the nurturance and growth of personal relationships. Hereby, Gilligan outlines three

stages in women's moral development: the fist is a selfish stage; the second a belief in

conventional morality; the third post-conventional. This is a sequential development from

selfish, to social, and to principled morality. Girls start out with a selfish orientation but

they typically feel it is wrong to act in their own interests because they come to think they

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[7] Jean Hampton, "The Case for Feminism," in *The Liberation Debate: Rights at Issue*, eds. Michael P. T. Leahy and Dan Cohn-Sherbok (London: Routledge, 1996), 14.

[8] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 60-63.

equate interests for themselves with selfishness. Finally, they learn it is incorrect to

ignore their own interests and the interests of others. What one needs to remember is that

in Gilligan's words, "the moral imperative that emerges repeatedly in interviews with

women is an injunction to care, a responsibility to discern and alleviate that real and

recognizable trouble of the world."[9]

If Gilligan documented how women's own voice and moral reasoning - the

feelings of compassion and empathy for others, as well as concern for commitments that

arise out of relationships - are different from men's, Belenky and her co-authors proposed

the ways of knowing that are unique to women. Belenky and her co-authors recognize

early differences in studies that have included women as a primary or central focus, such

as those of Carol Gilligan. Both scholars encourage women to discover and use their own

voice, challenging a masculine-structured settings[10] that women face.

Difference cannot be used as a basis for discrimination against women. Likewise,

women do not need to think themselves as inferior to men on the scales and norms that

reflect only men's experience while men may not say that they represent all people.

Intriguingly, Gilligan provides the statement of men's "I" as one of many reasons to

prove the assumption that men are set to separation or independence, rationality, and self-

interest when they describe who they are. Koreans prefer to use the words "we in or our"

instead of those of "I or my" because they believe that their identity are defined in the

fused state of "I-merged-we-ness" and they can feel "the central power of the assumed-

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[9] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 100.

[10] Belenky, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, xiii.

we-hood-ness" in their "our" culture and "oneness and wholeness."[11] Herein, one needs

to consider the cross-cultural applicability of women's development or to modify

Western oriented strategies beyond a generic and universal feature of their human living

and meaning making although they share common problems in light of feminist

understandings. In that sense, the analysis regarding the issues of women's attachment

and relationship vs. men's separation and independence cannot satisfy cultural

differences[12] that affect ethical decision-making process and identity formation and

include the comprehensive meanings of a people beyond gender difference.

However, unless women accept a posture based on responsibility and caring about

themselves and others for their discussions, they feel burdened by these stereotypes

imposed by their context and do not know how to deal with the problems out of

disconnection and dislocation, being caught in phases of self-loathing, self-pity, self-rage,

and self-denial. What do women do when they become aware of their frustration with her

social context? For this conflict, Susan Herkman borrows from Foucault's notion to share

how the marginalized or minorities can amplify their voices and solidify their identity in

such contexts: it is to become the self-creating subject who "pieces together elements of

subjectivity from the discursive tools available, is capable of resistance" and "refuses to

be scripted by the dominant discourse and turns instead to subjugated knowledge to

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[11] Riwha Hong, "Shame in the Korean Uri Culture: An Interpretation of Self Psychology and Korean Indigenous Psychology" (PhD diss., Drew University, 2008) 134.

[12] Morny Joy, "Postcolonial and Gendered Reflections: Challenge for Religious Studies,"in *Gender, Religion, and Diversity: Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, eds. Ursula King and Tina Beattie (London: Continuum, 2004), 22-23.

fashion alternative discourses of subjectivity."[13] In a word, this individual subjectivity

based on the "non-hegemonic discourses" that Foucault develops can emphasize the more

localized moral voices and a multiplicity of moral voices, challenging and destructing

universalism and autonomous subject of enlightenment and the major traditions of moral

theory, which have been dominant since the Enlightenment.[14] One can find an answer in

narratives or storytelling about how the marginalized can get their particular moral voices

and choices to become the self-creating subjects.

As aforementioned, Belenky and her collogues have underlined women's ways of

knowing different from those of men emphasized on the importance of the relationships

with outside world and care for others. Connected knowing differs dramatically from

separate knowing. Separate knowing refers to the idea of separating oneself from the

knowing and raising above it, and connected knowing which included procedures for

"gaining access to their people's knowledge"[15] based on the pattern gained by interviews

with 135 women registered in various institutions. This "may be difficult for men, [but]

many women find it easier to believe than to doubt. It is easy for me to take other

people's point of view. It is hard for me to argue, because I feel like I can understand the

other person's argument."[16] In the meantime, I, a separate knower "never take anything

someone says for granted. I just tend to see the contrary. I like playing devil's advocate,

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[13] Susan J. Hekman, *Moral Voices, Moral Selves: Carol Gilligan and Feminist Moral Theory* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995), 84-5.

[14] Susan Hekman, "Subjects and Agents: The Question for Feminism," in *Provoking Agents: Gender and Agency in Theory and Practice,* ed. Judith Kegan Gardiner (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 202-04.

[15] Belenky, *Women's Ways of Knowing,* 13.

[16] Ibid., 113.

arguing the opposite of what somebody's saying, thinking of exceptions to what the person has said, or thinking of a different train of logic."[17] Separate knowers learn through explicit instruction adopting a different lens of a specific discipline. They like to be as objective as possible by excluding their feelings and emotions. When they are in discussion with others who may have different ideas, they try to defend their own idea, using reason to find problems in others' opinions. They also do not easily accept new ideas unless they provide reliable proof via reputable sources such as textbooks, scholarships or their own direct experience or understanding.[18] Connected knowers learn through empathy and "begin with an attitude of trust: they assume the other person has something good to say."[19] Belenky and her colleagues hypothesized that separate knowers can distinguish between the effortless intuition of subjectivism and the deliberate, imaginative extension of their understanding into positions that initially feel wrong or remote but they did not elaborate how the separate knowing can be resources or tools in nurturing women in getting their independence or alienation, and self-agency.

Gilligan points out that women's independent and autonomous actions might bring to the women such rewards as the strength of their identity, self-discernment, satisfactory life, and social advancement. Lack of the cognitive power to recognize others as well as themselves as separate, individuated entities[20] can bring difficulties to separate their voice from others, seeing that speaking their voices is intertwined with women's

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[17] Belenky, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, 13.

[18] Ibid., 103.

[19] Ibid., 117.

[20] Gilligan, *In a Different Voice*, 51.

representation and sense of independence and autonomy though one totally agrees that

relationships with others and life events are closely associated to women's development.

Lack of autonomy and subjectivity causes women to reinforce their silence with their

self-abnegation denial and unconditional submission on external authority for their life

and the formation of their identity filled with deaf and dumb feeling, experience of

exclusion, invisibility, and ignorance, dependence on the power although silence is used

as a sign to resist the strong powerful in light of the socially weak.[21]

Patricia Killen proposes an alternative in relation to the subjective agency of

Christian women. According to her, women need to grow in 'wise faith' that

acknowledges both the death-dealing and life-giving elements in their tradition, and finds

healthy ways to re-conceive and relate to that tradition. When women have achieved their

own voice by negotiating their relationships with and having dialogue with their Christian

heritage and tradition, they often feel newly alienated or dislocated like 'standing by a

river' and seek for their frustrated longing like 'dying of thirst' by the institutional

church. However, they are also able to enhance their voice and have deep encounter with

themselves, God, and their faith communities.[22] Finding a wise faith in which women

can find their voices through the negotiation with their religious tradition is a way to

empower women to let their voices be heard in communities of faith to Killen.

It depends on the context but women in many countries who have lived in cultures

full of misogynistic practices have not learned to love themselves so that they have been

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[21] Belenky, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, 24-34.

[22] Patricia O'Connell Killen, *Finding Our Voices: Women, Wisdom, and Faith* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1997), 23-30.

domesticated to give themselves to others. Feminist theologians have worked to empower women to speak their voices, defending their self-denigration and clear the way to see themselves as good and valuable beings created good by God and worthy of a rich spiritual life although the existing theologies define women as descendants of Eve having inflicted sin on the whole world in the first place.[23] Accordingly, many Christian women regard themselves as the sinners as the descendants of Eve who bring about sin to this world.

Women's recovering their spirituality is proposed as a holistic way to nurture and take care of them. Patricia Gillespie and Mary Mathews highlight that sharing life stories both require and nurture trust resulting from the feminist vignette that women's voices sound of thirst, of longing, like mothers' voices, and a whispered prayer that can be heard at the city gate or in the public square, and in the silence of interior space when women participate in their religious activities.[24] Maria Harris also admits that women's spiritual development in patriarchal or andocentric culture is not easy, but she points out that women who seek for their spiritual formation might "reach a point where increased vulnerability meets with deepened awareness"[25] to find a new life. She did not articulate spiritual experience of women in light of cognitive or intellectual framework but her proposal might be called feminist spirituality in that she uses reflection as the primary

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[23] Choi, *Korean Women and God,* 156-57.

[24] Patricia Gillespie and Mary Mathews, *Voices from Within* (Pasadena, CA: Hope Publishing House, 1994), 110.

[25] Harris, *Dance of the Spirit,* 13.

mental capacity "along with some analysis and critique directed primarily at dominant

spiritual concepts."[26]

According to Iris Yob, the feminist spirituality that Harris proposes reveals

several features with implications. Her suggestion about women's development of their

inner spirituality via reflection and metaphor of dance might satisfy feminists who have

critiqued patriarchal spiritualties and immersion into sensuous and emotional spirituality,

asking for reconstruction of healthy and holistic spirituality for women. Her work on

spiritual development of women is illuminated in the notion of fluid, dynamic, non-

hierarchical phases or steps[27] so that her concept of spirituality opens new visions and

patterns where women are able to open inner knowledge sites, to stir, to question, to

advance meaningful relationships, and raise levels of spiritual awareness through

imagery, mysterious, esoteric ways. Through their spiritual empowerment via the images,

the process of sharing pleasure,[28] women come to grow and reform to meet their current

needs and understandings and know how to use compassionate, industrious, fluid,

resilient, and mutually complementary fluidity toward each other. That is why a feminist

spirituality based on the "conscious analysis and critique of present images coupled with

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[26] Harris, *Dance of the Spirit*, 117. The main focus of the dance of spirituality that she formulates is on the seven steps. For the seven steps of women's spirituality, see p. 88.

[27] Iris M. Yob, "Images of Spirituality: Traditional and Contemporary," in *Spirituality, Philosophy, and Education*, eds. David Carr and John Haldane (London: RoutledgeFalmer, 2003), 117-18.

[28] Katherine Howard, "Love and Humility in the Benedictine Tradition," in *Tending the Holy: Spiritual Direction across Traditions*, ed. Norvene Vest (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2003), 119.

creative construction of corrective alternatives are skills and opportunities inherent in

spiritual ways of thinking and can be fostered for spiritual growth."[29]

In the same vein, some of Korean mothers still exhort their daughters to obey

socially accepted norms in which the brides must be dumb for three years, blind for three

years, and be deaf for three years. Korean married women are expected to endure their

husband and mother-in-law who are hard on them by being dumb, blind, and deaf for a

long time and not allowed to being liberated to speak for themselves and trust their

experience and life story. The Biblical passage that "women should remain silent in the

churches (1 Cor 14:34) and the practice of women's three years' being dumb, blind, and

deaf results in having contributed to underrepresentation of women in church leadership,

still being tied to understanding and strengthening women's self tying in relation to

others, or outside power.

Feminist psychologists and theologians such as Belenky et al, Killen, and Patricia

Gillespie et al. have observed that women in patriarchal contexts feel a disconnection or

separation as problems, rather than as an opportunity for their moving forward the

building of their independent and autonomous agency. Thus, fostering women to

maintain the balance between separation and relationship is one of crucial tasks of

narrative educators for full development of women. Education has been seen as the

means to raise minds into their highest powers of discernment in the male-dominated

Christian community and to provide an opportunity to claim their agency through the

pattern of knowing and learning that is unique to women.

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[29] Yob, "Images of Spirituality," Carr and Haldane, *Spirituality, Philosophy and Education*, 119.

Women's Faith Development

Feminist theologians like Sharon Parks who attempt to see women's development on behalf of women's experience argue that the promise and vulnerability of women can be changed into "the experience of the birth of critical awareness and the dissolution and recomposition of the meaning of self, other, world, and God"[30] when they seek for the meaning and development of faith in the most comprehensive dimension of their experience and engage in the ongoing dialogue and interaction between the self and the world, between community and their lived reality.[31] They can offer an alternative to traditional models of faith development that reflects the specific experience of women, focusing her critique on James Fowler's stages of faith. In spite of that, Nicola Slee points out that "the journey towards awakening is neither an easy nor a risk-free one. Women may have to choose between the acceptance and affirmation of significant others and their own selfhood, paying a high price in rejection or punishment for daring to challenge the normative patterns set down by society and for choosing to their own strength and powers of selfhood."[32]

Concurring that men's experience were the norm and women's were deviations from the norm as Gilligan and Belenky argued, Slee calls attentions to narratives or stories that "represents the mode nearest to experience, most concrete and accessible, and yet at the same time most capable of capturing the complexity, dynamism and nuanced

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[30] Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams: Mentoring Young Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2000), 5.

[31] Ibid., 23.

[32] Nicola Slee, *Women's Faith Development: Patterns and Processes*, Explorations in Practical, Pastoral, and Empirical Theology (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2004), 112.

nature of lived experience."[33] Put it concretely, stories or narratives create the all-encompassing differences and similarities within the women's experience of faith development. The narrative faithing or the conversational faithing referring to the faith or meaning-making activity of individuals and the patterns of women's narratives for their faith development can provide significant and reoccurring linguistic strategies that women[34] use to shape their faith experience found in women's stories. Here, the conversational context or space of narrative as a significant catalyst of faith and a noticeably appropriate means in building and nurturing women's faith helps for "the distinctive shape and texture of each women's faith narrative to come into view"[35] by discovering current deadlocked emotions such as anxiety, suffering, agony, fear, and at last, the possible to transform their deadlock situation if the conversational environment allows them to doubt, question, flee, struggle, and speak out or up, and secures their spiritual, emotional, and spiritual well-being.

Narrative faithing that Slee articulates gives historical perspectives, embraces women's stories in light of lived experience, and nurtures their own stories to reclaim autonomy and subjectivity in that narrative faithing is using narratives as a primary and fundamental mode of women's faithing and thus it supports women to go through several process: remembering of the past experience by giving power to reassure their past positive experience if their past is positive, but also by challenging to transform their negative memories if they are negative, and composing the individual's experience as

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[33] Nicola Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 68.

[34] Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 61.

[35] Madan Sarup, *Identity, Culture, and the Postmodern World* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1996), 167.

weaving past experiences to be a texture of present meaning for life and faith.[36] These

strategies that Slee proposes are not unique to women, but the conversational context of

faith resulted from the honest and revealing conversations encourages them to gain rich

spirituality and thus claim their ownership or self-agency, reconstructing their holistic

and autonomous identity.

One of the major things in women's faith development is their awakening. Slee

regards awakenings as "neither pain-free nor risk free"[37] because awakening comes not

only with resistance and breakthrough towards what had repressed them but also with a

desire for new relationships with self, others, and God. The story of the woman bent over

(Lk 13:10-17) is an example where the bent-over woman did not identify herself with her

deformity or her pain, but came to realize what happened to her after encountering Jesus

Christ. Pamela Cooper-White explains that after "the persistent inner sense of emptiness,

fraud, self-doubt, shame, and incipient depression associated with these experiences are

often missed out from considerations of the developmental issues,"[38] and then able to

critically reflect on the emotions, wordless images and bodily feelings, are women able to

nurture valid ways of knowing, growing, and associating with others, communities, and

God. In a word, this woman's accepting the full range of emotions enabled her to be used

to her infirmity that diminished her life, and simultaneously connected their situation in

their own power, awakening the possibilities and freedom that she had not experienced in

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[36] Sarup, *Identity, Culture, and the Postmodern World*, 41.

[37] Slee, *Women's Faith Development*, 112.

[38] Pamela Cooper-White, "Open the Eyes: Understanding the Impact of Trauma on Development," in *In Her Own Time: Women and Developmental Issues in Pastoral Care*, ed. Jeanne Stevenson Moessner (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 99-100.

her whole life. Simply put, one can say the process of awakening or women's frustrated and hope-filled longing comes with resistance and desire as an act of faith.[39] Some may replace the notion of awakening to that of conversion, but Carol Christ sees "a coming to self rather than a giving up of self, as a grounding of selfhood in the powers of being, rather than a surrender of self to the powers of being."[40]

As aforementioned, feminists have agreed that girls and women establish and develop their identity in relationship or rationality or connectedness with others. Janet Surrey assumes that a 'subject relations theory' or 'self-in-relation' is the way of establishing a relationship marked by inter-subjectivity that is defined as "the ongoing, intrinsic inner awareness and responsiveness to the continuous existence of the other or others and the expectation of mutuality.[41] Her inter-subjective model of self-in-relations refers "to a process which encompasses increasing levels of complexity, choice, fluidity, and articulation within the context of human development"[42] in terms of "relationship differentiation," or an alternative to the object relations theory. The relationship differentiation will be stimulated when a deeper and richer relationship, which is impossible when women are either too closely fused or reactively distanced, or cut off, is achieved. The central objective is differentiation of the self in relation to others, upholding the balance between being separate and connected. Then, the self-in-model

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[39] Killen, *Finding Our Voices*, 46-51.

[40] Carol P. Christ, *Diving Deep and Surfacing: Women Writers on Spiritual Quest*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1986), 19.

[41] Janet Surry, "The Self-in-Relation: A Theory of Women's Development," in *Women's Growth in Connection: Writings from the Stone Center*, ed. Judith V. Jordan (New York: Guilford Press, 1991), 59-61.

[42] Ibid., 61-62.

can be seen as helping women have a new self-image derived from each new relationship and them be more mature in their emotional and relational life.

Creating a Safe Milieu or Conversational Setting

Creating relational and conversational setting is a very important element in nurturing holistic spiritual and psychological development of women especially in the patriarchal culture where women have not got an opportunity to speak their stories and thoughts, and they have not learned how to express their thoughts. Stevenson-Moessner discusses the woman at the well (Jn 4:7-29) who has never truly been in relationships but found herself in relation to Jesus and other people. The woman at the well comes to go through a transforming experience when Jesus invites her into a deep and penetrating conversation, and leads her to new thought, life, vision. In this relational and conversational setting, her feeling of despair and avoidant attitudes towards the self, others, including Jesus, have been transformed, so finally she was remembered as one of the most important persons in the Gospels though she still remains nameless.[43] As Jesus talked with the woman at the well, creating true relational and conversational space is required to evoke the discernment of their representation and feeling of their beings as subjective and independent children of God. Carol Hess proposes 'hard dialogue and deep connection' as one of the requisite conditions for making communities of faith conversational, relational, and healthy places for girls. Through or in 'hard dialogue and deep connection' "care must be understood as God's concern for human wholeness and

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[43] Jeanne Stevenson Moessner, "From Samaritan to Samaritan:Journey Mercies," in *Through the Eyes of Women: Insights for Pastoral Care*, ed. Jeanne Stevenson Moessner (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 327-33.

widespread justice," inclusion, and independence,[44] and women are allowed to engage in the deconstructive and reconstructive waves beyond sweet talk and the reassurance of stereotyped ideologies although theological traditions have had "a checked history with regard to girls and women."[45]

According to Hess, the paradigm of healthy community also is grounded in the hard dialogue and deep connection. Such communities would be a positive and healthy for all-women and men, girls and boys. As one of the strategies to create the desirable communities of faith, she draws on null curriculum to point out what is missed in classic theology of sin-as-pride. Sin is real, and its manifestations are gender-related - male/pride and women/self-abnegation - so when theologies oversimplify and negate deep dialogues, women cannot sense their sin. Women's sin must be discussed in terms of self-abnegation rather than self-pride when they cannot help but struggle with the lack of self-assertion, unlike men who need to struggle with pride.[46] Elizabeth Moore also views relational and conversational settings in her *Teaching from the Heart*, or the educational process focused with the principles of rationality, equality, and openness, and the organic acts where the wholeness of the body is related and revered, where "the lives of students and societies are nourished and transformed."[47] In the context, nobody is dominated, manipulated or discriminated against or by the other, producing openness, equality,

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[44] Hess, *Caretakers of Our Common House*, 45.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid., 51.

[47] Moore, *Teaching from the Heart*, 201-02.

diversity, or multiplicity so women are expected to be partners for the well-being and healing of the entire community.

The creation of healthy environment and the engagement in conversation of women can be another strategy to transform gendered communities into genuine community as a common house where women are nurtured to have a clear sense of self-understanding. Their self that Hess advocates is based on the evolving self of Robert Kegan. The evolving self in this genuine community is the one who keeps making meanings of their life and making sense of their experience by engaging in internal experience of growth, and transition, disruptions, and triumphs and telling their stories regarding the negotiation between reality and dream or ideal context as lifelong activities.[48] This kind of self enables women in communities of faith to engage in hard dialogue and deep connections and this dialogues plays an important role in evolving the self. Dori Baker also is one of many scholars who underscore the importance of a safe place that allows female cluster groups or teen girl groups to tell their story, discerning "the problems of silenced selves, missing voices, and girls in the footnotes."[49] Sharing each other's stories lead "girls to more fulfilling lives because of a connection to their feminist inheritance"[50] and to experiencing God's work, making meaning, taking action, and building solidarity to heal another's oppression as echoing a major theme of liberation theology. In that sense, stories can be seen as good resources as well as a

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[48] Robert Kegan, *The Evolving Self: Problem and Process in Human Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 109.

[49] Dori Grinenko Baker, *Doing Girlfriend Theology: God-Talk with Young Women* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2005), 17.

[50] Ibid., 20.

means to foster women to recognize various social and cultural contexts and to approach

a wider understanding of what it means to be women in their own cultures. For women's

self-understanding, she adopts feminist models reflecting women's ways of knowing and

women's developmental characteristics as one discussed.

The understanding of community of faith as the safe place resonates with that of

the church round table by Letty Russell where God's hospitality is practiced, "struggling

to become a household of freedom, a community where walls have been broken down so

that God's welcome to those who hunger and thirst for just in made clear."[51] The place

can be the 'sanctuary of the church' as the place of safety where all are allowed to enter

and those who are the most marginal, weak or despised of any community can be

protected by entering. Thus, communities of faith are greeted and accepted with

hospitality where growth and nurture are shared, where leaders and members gather

about around table of equality, with no head nor foot, and where patriarchal, hierarchical,

and pyramid structures based on domination and subordination are not preferred.[52] Zoë

Bennett Moore borrowed from Mercy Oduyoye to introduce the African women's image

of church as 'God's household' where equal and organic relationships is valued in

speaking their voices and exercising leadership, and operating communities of faith.[53] In

the same vein, Russell highlights the notion of hospitality as one of the major elements

for creating the church in the round table because hospitality invites communities of faith

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[51] Letty M. Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 12.

[52] Letty M. Russell, *Just Hospitality: God's Welcome in a World of Difference* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 86-90.

[53] Zoë Bennett Moore, *Introducing Feminist Perspectives on Pastoral Theology* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2002), 109.

to struggle that "connects with those at the margin and celebrates the way God has called diverse people, so that we may all share together at God's welcome tale."[54]

How one can create the congregations with feminist theological eyes where women's reality and experiences of oppression and suffering are transformed into those of resistance, hope, and reconciliation by modeling Jesus Christ in creating the Christen community is one of the major tasks of Christian religious educators. Taken together, Hess proposes to transform communities of faith into the healthy environment or the safe place that makes it possible for girls and women, even men, to share their stories and tell their voices, foster critical reflection on genuine rationality, learn how to engage in the world, especially the margins, develop partnership and interaction among the members, and bring about gender-inclusive transformation to congregations.

Possibilities

One has explored that men-centered societies encourage men to be assertive through the various opportunities and development of their ability and role to speak whereas they give a challenging look at the women who are able to express their opinion and exert their ability in their context. Additionally, one has looked at women's moral and psychological developmental process and features and their ways of knowing different from male-dominant forms of knowing and their faith and spiritual development. Herein, one needs to think of what enables women in communities of faith to foster the authored self, narrative self or other selves based on their self-agency.

Women's self-assertion and self-compassion also might be a concrete way in nurturing their identity with their self-agency, empowering them to discover who they

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[54] Russell, *Church in the Round*, 181.

really are and what they have beyond all attempts that have excluded them in the

traditional gender understanding. "Cultural assumptions are embedded not just in role

models, media images, causal conversation, and communal reinforcement; they are

embedded in the narratives a culture tells as well"[55] so that cultures have a profound

impact on a people's assertion and play important roles in adopting their manners and

habits. Above all, culture is not women's friend in patriarchal context. Face-saving

practice is one of many practices in Korean culture. For U.S. Americans "face is more

individualistic, low, context, and is associated with intra-psychic phenomena. Asians

(including Koreans), one the other hand, understand the concept of face to be related to

honor, claimed self-image, and the family/organization."[56] The meaning of face is more

self-oriented and individualistic to Americans or Western people, but it is more other-

directed and relational to Koreans or Asians seeing that Koreans are brought up to depend

on each other and cooperate with members for their group's benefits.

When women or daughters did something that loses their family honor, heads of

family or males punish them. For instance, the Korean women survivors of the Japanese

Imperial Army's comfort women system, which was the military sexual slavery by

Japanese imperialists, were not welcome by their family members, because face-saving

or family honor is more important than their life or their survival. In ancient times,

women were taught to kill themselves when they lose their chastity, throwing all blames

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[55] Rogers, *Finding God in the Graffiti*, 107.

[56] T. Youn-ja Shim, *Changing Korea: Understanding Culture and Communication* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), 36.

on women. [57] Looking at how culture works to evade the self-disclose of people under the face-saving culture, one can find how hard it is for women to freely assert themselves in patriarchal contexts. In particular, as this face-saving culture is related to patriarchy, it reinforces women's virtues based on submission and dependence, requiring them to be domesticated at any cost even though doing so means hurting their selves or ignores their competence and thus generates unhappy results to their life, and even labeling women's self-assertion as selfish and blatant.

Thus, Pamela Butler advises that women needs how to assert to enhance their freedom to state their feelings and opinions without anxiety or embarrassment, "allowing other people to have their own feelings and opinions."[58] Self-assertion is a basic sense of proficiency, practical and moral in androcentric context, depending on self-esteem and respect. It is also ability to identify their own needs and make the ways to meet what they need so that it includes the process and efforts to make plans, carry them out, visualize the possibilities for their own life, and thus seek their self-realization. Ultimately, self-assertion must be the choice that women have to make for themselves again and again in their lives, as they make their way within social structures, which often impede their well being. Simply, "the ability to nurture their self-agency is at the heart of moral agency."[59] Women can be empowered to address this context and transform their traditional

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[57] Herman C. Waetjen, "Social Location and the Hermeneutical Mode of Integration," in *Reading from This Place*, eds. Fernando F. Segovia and Mary Ann Tolbert (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 84-89.

[58] Pamela Butler, *Self-Assertion for Women*, revised ed. (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 3.

[59] Toinette M. Eugene, "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot!: A Womanist Response to Sexual Violence and Abuse," in *Violence against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook*, eds. Carol J. Adams and Marie M. Fortune (New York: Continuum, 1995), 181.

behaviors corresponding to being docile or remaining silent when they feel humiliated or take offense, if they learn or practice how to wisely and assertively express what they want to say.

In addition to self-assertion, self-talk or internal dialogue can be one of the powerful ways that women can use to meet their needs for their self-agency and self-worth. Patriarchal context has associated women's self-assertion with such negative images as unfeminine, bossy, and selfish. That is why women are used to self-criticism that tends to create ill-directed structures to hurt and undermine their self-values and then stimulates them to lose their self-confidence and overlook their strengths and worth, signaling negative message of criticism and defeat. Women achieve their self-assertion. Therefore, through their internal dialogues, women need to set the goals and depend on themselves as make-decision, and nurture the ability to reject that unfair treatment or demand from others, and their behavior, attitudes, self-esteem, and relationships with others[60] by replacing their self-criticism with their inner dialogue with encouragement, self-leadership, and support, competence, patience, and energy

When something has gone wrong, many do not hesitate to point finger at themselves. If one had a friend who spoke to her/him in the same way that she/he sometimes speaks to herself/himself, how long would that person allow her/him to be her/his friend? One can be more brutal to oneself than any other enemy would be. Thus, self-esteem is often shaky at best. But is there something that is more substantial than self-esteem or what can boost the self-esteem of women? It is related to self-compassion. Self-compassion is actually the best way to build true, lasting self-confidence. To be

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[60] Butler, *Self-Assertion for Women*, 36.

compassionate means that she/he has still the same kindness and sympathy toward themselves whether one wins or loses.

Kristin Neff provides three components needed for their self-compassion: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. Self-kindness is to stop "the constant self-judgment and disparage internal commentary that most of us have come to see as normal."[61] When they stop condemning their mistakes and failure, they are able to start building their confidence and to understand who they are. Endless self-criticism without proper direction and strategy damages their mental and spiritual well-being and dampens even healthy energy so that it causes tension and anxiety, failing to help achieve what they want to do.[62] Neff asks them to hug themselves when they are upset, because physical touch provides a sense of security and soothes tension and stress.

When Kate Ogg, mother of a premature baby heard that her doctor pronounced the body of the baby dead, she wanted to say goodbye and let him know that his parents loved him. Therefore, she asked the nurse to put the baby across Kate's bare chest. When she held him for two hours, miraculously, the baby opened his eyes and survived. In that sense, hugging is a miraculous medicine that gives the baby back his life. Hugging is a good remedy to give a feeling of safety, energy, and an emotional boost.[63] Besides, the hug is one way to express the kindness that "to be more fully realized it needs to be distinguished from being ineffectual or meek. It needs to be infused with wisdom.

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[61] Kristin Neff, *Self-Compassion: Stop Beating Yourself up and Leave Insecurity behind* (New York: William Morrow, 2011), 41.

[62] Mary Welford, *The Power of Self-Compassion: Using Compassion-Focused Therapy to End Self-Criticism and Build Self-Confidence* (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, Inc. 2013), 13-15.

[63] Neff, *Self-Compassion*, 49-50.

Kindness needs to be supported by courage and threaded with balance."[64] Kindness as

self-compassion includes mindfulness that presents awareness and that accepts whatever

might be happening at the time, engendering intimacy with their surroundings, reminding

one that amid the pursuits of kindness, there is one person that often gets overlooked:

one's self.[65] Accordingly, building their self-compassion or self-confidence can lead

women to healing, peace, and courage to bring about gender-inclusive transformation to

their communities and themselves.

<u>Toward the Self Who Enables Women To Speak Their Voices</u>

Heintz Streib proposes a new model that he names as typology of religious

development. This new model that "is aimed at accounting more fully for the life-history

and life-world relatedness of religion n at its principal interactive, interpersonal origin

and shape,"[66] effectively situating itself in the midst of ongoing discussions in practical

theology and religious education. What Streib makes attempt is to account more fully for

the structural diversity and narrative and content diversity that mirrors and invokes the

inclusion of content-analytical and narrative-procedural diversity in understanding human

beings, the world, the enhanced religious perspectives and God's representation in their

lifestyle.[67]

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[64] Sharon Salzberg, *The Kindness Handbook: A Practical Companion* (Boulder, CO: Sounds True, 2008), 1.

[65] Ibid., 124.

[66] Heinz Strib, "Faith Development Research at Twenty Years," in *Developing a Public Faith: New Directions in Practical Theology: Essays in Honor of James W. Fowler*, eds., Richard Robert Osmer and Friedrich Schweitzer (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2003), 34.

[67] Ibid.

In addition to the new model of Streib that reflects people's life story, history, interaction, and diversity, Hubert J. M. Hermans introduces the dialectical integration or fusion of story telling, that brings about the dialogical self that has been one of the central themes in this field since the 1990s. A human being is a storyteller, in that everybody "has a story to tell about his or her own life. In telling this story the person gives special significance to particular events (or groups of events), which function as units of meaning or using a more dynamic terms."[68] Herein, the greatest value of storytelling is its ability to motivate people. Its motivation stems from the attachment to story and the desire to find out how the story makes sense to their life, because hearing and speaking the story creates the energy, enthusiasm, and motivation to study and explore.[69] Through this process, the self is formed. It is made up a multitude of voices in dialogical relationships with each other while "different voices often of a markedly different characters and representing a multiplicity of relatively independent worlds, interact to create a self-narrative."[70] Then, the self is considered an organized process of valuation, representing the manifestations of self-functioning and positions, self-enhancement and contact and union with the others. To become dialogical self is to form the self's personal meanings with the utterance of multiple voices and to be bestowed with a voice and expressed as arising from a person's position in relation to others that dialogical relations surface.[71]

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[68] H. J. M. Hermans, Els Hermans Jasen, *Self-Narratives: The Construction of Meaning in Psychotherapy* (New York: Guilford Press, 1995), 1.

[69] Ibid., 27-28.

[70] H. J. M. Hermans, *The Dialogical Self: Meaning as Movement* (San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1993), 208.

[71] Hermans, *The Dialogical Self*, 212-13.

Dan McAdams sees this dialogical self as an alternative to the limitation of the Eriksonian identity crisis that is the central motivation in the selection or creation of a narrative personal identity that becomes reaffirmed or revised throughout adulthood. The identity of a person involves more than one character or image that can supplement each other, but also sometimes oppose each other in individuals, constantly generating and updating narratives of identity.[72]

In the context where some positions of the self are required to be silent or suppress other positions without a gradual transitional process or the interacting and dialectical process of the two domains, dialogical self cannot be formed. When it comes to the formation of the dialogical self of women, women should keep engaging in the process of meaning construction and deconstruction, striving for self-enhancement and longing for context and relationship with others. Dori Baker asserts that story is the opposite of silence, so that telling one's story is related to breaking women's silence. Starting to tell our stories might result in liberating women when it comes to their self-agency or narrative self.[73] Nonetheless, just telling their stories may not change anything. As Kirk Schneider notes, in order for stories to result in bringing about personally and socially "awe-inspired transformation," people must experience an awakening of awe, an opening into life as meaningful, surprising, joyful, and authentic and move "toward greater presence, freedom, courage, and application."[74] Personal and social

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[72] Dan MacAdams, "Unity and Purpose in Human Lives: the Emergence of Identity as a Life Story," in *Studying Persons and Lives*, ed. Albert I. Rabin (New York: Springer Pub. Co, 1990), 173-75.

[73] Baker, *Doing Girlfriend Theology*, 131.

[74] Kirk J. Schneider, *Awakening to Awe: Personal Stories of Profound Transformation* (Lanham, MD: Jason Aronson, 2009), 153.

transformation of women or an awakening of awe is done through the ways of 'experience near' and 'experience distant.' Participants or women are asked to take the stories and address basic questions about themselves, and to engage in the stories and questions from 'experience near' (sharing the feelings evoked by the stories) and 'experience distant' (the themes, concepts, issues evoked in the stories including where God is). When their stories are connected to tradition, to others, the Word or the sacred, their stories become catalysts for a potential change in the storytellers. Through this process, the storytellers and participants are capable of being changed.[75]

How can women hold and develop such multiplicity and plurality that the dialogical or narrative self, despite the gendered context where physical and sexual discrimination against women is tolerated? Above all, patriarchal society or sexist culture inflicts on women's positive self-evaluation due to their one-down position in society. Thus, Christian women are in "the conflict between religious faith's claims about God of love and believers' inability to love themselves"[76] and in a world that is burdened by such theologies of "submission and obedience... to an angry and exacting God."[77] In order that women find their authentic self and enhance their self-esteem, they are demanded to break the stereotypes and the habits of "conforming to patriarchal notions of who women should be: docile, subordinate, dependent, overfuntionaries in the home, underfunctionaries in the world."[78] In the same vein, Carol Pitt emphasizes the metaphor

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[75] Baker, *Doing Girlfriend Theology*, 33-36.

[76] Carroll Saussy, *God Images and Self Esteem: Empowering Women in a Patriarchal Society* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991), 143.

[77] Ibid., 13.

[78] Saussy, *God Images and Self Esteem*, 151.

of the self as a *pluriform* self, respecting its potential oneness and *manyness* that might be used as a treatment for women with dissociative identity disorder in terms of pastoral care and counseling, and as a potential or possibility to empower women to get over the concept of their stereotyped self imposed by social context, particularly patriarchal society by developing possibilities given by their many selves in light of feminist and postmodern conceptualizations of the self.[79]

Considering identity is constructed, justified, maintained, and reconstructed through stories from multiple voices and their self-positions, the women who try to break the patriarchal habits as Sussay explores can engage in self-confrontation strategies that start with self-investigation from a variety of internal and external self-positions that exemplify a particular dialogical interchanges, conflicts, or struggles. That provides with a window into the current configuration of their system of valuations and the composite of significant and meaningful aspects of their life narratives, which are continually reorganized to accommodate the flow of positive and negative life events.[80] The self-confrontation method for being a true self is effective in that it empowers Christian women to look into who they are and where they are and further to engage in the process of negotiating among various understanding, giving an opportunity for them to denote the transformative possibilities for women's lives through the formation of the dialogical self.

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[79] Heintz Streib, "Faith Development Research," Osmer and Schweitzer, *Developing a Public Faith*, 34.

[80] Hermans, *Self-Narratives*, 200-10.

Last but not least. Chris Hermans stresses a critical conceptual framework in elaborating his educational theory and practice. The participatory learning theory based on this critical conceptual framework he proposes is one of the major themes in his religious educational work that aims to foster the religious self and subjective self appropriate to the context of interreligious dialogue within the fragmented globalized society and coming from interdisciplinary domains.[81] The religious self that he explores corresponds to the polyphonic self who is internally dialogical, social, spatially located, and evolving, including the meaning of religiosity. According to him, when people or in particular women, engage in participatory learning or participation in religious practices, their self must be equipped with a certain set of faculties to share their religious features with others in a mutually respecting environment rather than just one who seeks for spirituality.[82] The paradigm of participatory learning is identical to those used by Baker, Hess, and Schneider in that the participatory learning reflects a paradigm shift from modernity toward cultural postmodernity characterized by the destruction of meta-narratives, a "preoccupation with certitude" to an "embrace of plurality, ambiguity,"[83] secularization, marginality, and silence. It emphasizes that the constructed religious self acquired by participatory learning is expected to construct the authored self. The authored self who is able to decide when they may speak their voice and construct their life by

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[81] C. A. M. Hermans, *Participatory Learning: Religious Education in a Globalizing Society*, (Leiden: BRILL, 2003), 13.

[82] Ibid., 206-07.

[83] Thomas H. Groome and Harold Daly Horell, eds., *Horizons & Hopes: The Future of Religious Education* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist, 2003), vii–viii.

themselves[84] by saying no to those persons and systems that attempt to control their life must be the outcome of participatory learning that encourages women to make a choice of their religions and their educational process.

Many female Christians in conservative communities of faith have not been exposed to the philosophical discourses reflecting such issues as religious pluralism, deconstructionism, marginality, and immanence, and diversity, etc. Therefore, Hermans's participatory learning grounded in the conceptions of religious self and polyphonic self can be used to enable faith communities to realize where they are and what is going on the world. To make the participatory learning of Korean Christian women possible, safe and healthy environment must be created in their congregations. In the safe and holy communities of faith, they are allowed to listen to, speak to, and converse with the Bible, and engage in the learning process of tradition as authentic agents and where they "might discern that trace of a living, breathing divine presence who seeks their companionship as much today as on the fresh new dawn of creation"[85] as Carol Hess, Dori Baker, and Frank Rogers all advocate.

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[84] Harol Daly Horeall, "Cutural Postmodernity and Christian Faith Formation," in Groome and Horell, *Horizons & Hopes,* 84-89.

[85] Baker, *Doing Girlfriend Theology,* 2-3.

Chapter Five

Narrative Research Approach

In general, qualitative research method is an inductive approach rather than a deductive approach that quantitative research method and its goal is to gain a deeper understanding of the opinions, feeling, and experiences of people and their social world through a holistic perspectives and approach. What researchers have direct encounters with research participants through interviews or observation and collect the qualitative date from them is one of the strong points of this approach. In this chapter, narrative research method, one of qualitative research methods will be explored.

Narrative Research Methodology

The etymologic roots of the words to narrate derive from telling (*narrare*) and knowing in "some particular way (*gnarus*) and the two are tangled rather than sorting. And narrative is seen as the gift or "the power to make sense of things when they don't"[1] by being linked together into a whole in a meaningful way that makes the multiple events, actions, and ideas found in life be narratives. One wonders how narratives and stories are different. According to Catherine Riessman, the term story is used as a synonym for narrative. Nonetheless, the former is more familiar than the latter to people. A story is always a narrative, but narrative structure is not limited to a story and reflects a construction by the teller or narrator. Both are interchangeably used but narrative is seen

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[1] Jerome S. Bruner, *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 27.

as a particular way of thinking or knowing as well as a skeleton for capturing the investigative quality of telling a story.[2]

Viewed from this outlook, what does it mean to use narrative in research context? Put simply, a narrative research approach starts with the assumption of *homo narrans* that humans are storytelling organism who, individually, live storied lives and "the history of narrative begins with the history of hu(man)kind; there does not exist and has never existed, a people without narratives."[3] Social communication takes place through narrative because "narrative is quintessential to the understanding and communication of the sociological. In a strict sense, all social science writing depends upon narrative structure and narrative devices."[4] People like stories and have their own stories. Stories enable them to create or construct, deconstruct, and reconstruct meanings, knowledge, thoughts, and perspectives based on their life of yesterday and tomorrow through the process to tell stories and listen to others. Clearly narrative is unavoidable, ubiquitous, and fundamental to human understanding, communication, learning, and social interaction. People use it to make sense of the world as they perceive and experience it and to tell others what they have discovered and know about the world or specific aspects of it.[5] This component is a narrative account of their understandings of narrative approaches to educational research.

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[2] Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Analysis* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1993), 6.

[3] Polkinghorne, *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*, 6.

[4] Laurel Richardson, *Fields of Play: Constructing an Academic Life* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1997), 27.

[5] Ivor Goodson et al., "Introduction: Life, Narrative, and Learning," in *Narrative Learning* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 9.

Though there has not been much agreement about definitions, meanings, and practice about narrative research among scholars, narrative research has come to have particular meanings in relation to its particular value, ethical, and epistemological positions. Narrative research is a research in which narratives or stories of lived experiences (data) are constructed and negotiated between the people involved as a means of capturing complex, multi-layers, and nuanced understandings of the work from it while narrative is used as data and data as narrative: "The study of narrative forces the social sciences to develop new theories, new methods, and new ways of talking about self and society."[6] The narrative approaches raise questions against the traditional epistemologies and methodologies of conventional research practices, while at the same time making connections with other domains of practice, theoretical areas and epistemological concerns. That is the interdisciplinary aspect of narrative inquiry in that it is the inter or multidisciplinary systematic study of the activities involved in gathering, analyzing, and representing participants' stories as told by them.

Though looking at the definition and some features of narratives, one still is curious to know how a story or narratives meets many academic requirements that social science asks for when it still is conjured with untruths or invention with the opposite of the traditional goals of researches. Namely, she or he might feel comfortable when stories come with the forms of novel or fairy tales rather than research. Therefore, experts of narrative research need to prove that this form of narrative research has potential and force to impact all areas of educational and social research, meeting objectivity, validity,

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[6] Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, eds., *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 4th ed (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2011), xi.

and reliability for their research outcomes. Patricia Clough proves the reliability of narrative research methodology by pointing out "all factual representations of reality, even statistical representations, are narratively constructed."[7] Clearly, there is no better way of capturing aspects of life, observations or hypotheses about the real world. Therefore, one needs to make all efforts to find ways of using stories for purpose of scholarships and for better understanding of the social context and situation.

As mentioned in chapter three, the narrative inquiry refers to a method of research where narrative is a way of knowing, responding to the question of what the meaning of experience is. One cannot say that the narrative knowing is all-new. As Mary Kramp claims "narrative knowing results in a story, which through structured, is flexible and attends to the personal, the specific, and the particular. As the researcher engaged in narrative inquiry, you interpret experience and events as told by the storyteller."[8] Bruner proves how appropriate narratives are as a logical-scientific thinking to capture, explain an understanding of the world into which individuals can feel, to analyze, and report to make sense of ambiguity and complexity of human minds.[9] Therefore, narrative knowing resulting from narrative methods might meet the goal if researchers desire to seek for the meanings of a particular phenomenon through an intimate relationship with their subject and find the connotative language those storytellers tell.

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[7] Pat Silkes, "The Literary Turn: Fictions and Poetry," Denzin and Lincoln, *The Sage Handbook*, 565.

[8] Mary Kay Kramp, "Exploring Life and Experience Through Narrative Inquiry," in *Foundations for Research: Methods of Inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences*, eds. Kathleen Bennett DeMarrais and Stephen D. Lapan (Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 103.

[9] Jerome S. Bruner, *The Culture of Education* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1996), 39-40.

Philosophical Roots and Influences

There are various forms of narrative research methods. Therefore, checking out philosophical influences or roots on narrative research methodology may be helpful in understanding what narrative research method is. For example, postmodernism and feminism are viewed as some philosophical roots of the narrative inquiry.

Louise Morley summarizes the features of postmodernism, a critical theory of social research as follows: the attack on the grand narratives grounded in the totalizing and universalizing theories, the rejection of the objectivity or only one truth that positivism asserts, the critique dependency on science and the search for absolutes and for certainty, and the disruption of certainties; multiplicity, plurality, fragmentation, uncertainty, complexity, and sophistication to social coherence and notions of causality based on modern assumptions in favor of a socially and linguistically decentered and disintegrated subject.[10] New information and mass media technologies have brought about the massive cultural changes in postmodern. In modernity, people's self was regarded as a rational, autonomous subject capable of knowing and controlling the objective world based in dominant forms of imperialistic, patriarchal, and ethnocentric perspectives. However, the information revolution brings to people in postmodern qualitative transformation of social relations. Greater accessibility of the new information technologies has altered people's relation to language and transformed the ways in which

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[10] Louise Morely, "Interrogating Patriarchy: The Challenges of Feminist Research," in *Breaking Boundaries: Women in Higher Education,* eds. Louise Morley and Val Walsh (Bristol, PA: Taylor & Francis, 1996), 140.

they constitute themselves and communicate and connect with others and the world by associating with globalization.[11]

Taken together, postmodernism is characterized by the following: globalization based on multinational and global communication; the emergence of cyber space or culture and the age of information established by rapid development of technologies such as computers; acceptance of living with virtual worlds or representations of the real; the emergence of interest in difference, with its paradoxical effect of multiculturalism and contextualization and fragmentation; the shift from a culture of production to a culture of consumption, now characterized by the consumption of signs such as information, entertainment, and advisement; the use of deconstructive and reconstructive methods; interest in pluralism and tolerance of plural possibilities. One cannot find statistics of how much education researchers have absorbed the impact of postmodernism, but "postmodernism exists in practice, whether or not it ought to in theory"[12] opening up the possibilities for academic development.

These characteristics have brought about a lot of changes that enable people to cross cultural boundaries with ease, sharing ideas and information beyond place and time without leaving their home. People who do not catch up the postmodern streams and are not exposed to technical environment or availability of technical revolutions are at a natural disadvantage to benefit from the digital revolution. Therefore, many people may think that postmodern time signal the end of many features of their present arrangements

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[11] Krishan Kumar, *From Post-Industrial to Post-Modern Society: New Theories of the Contemporary World* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1995), 33-40.

[12] Ian Stronach, *Educational Research Undone: The Postmodern Embrace* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1997), 40.

for schooling, education, and curriculum theorizing. Postmodern advocates emphasize "flexible bodies, better to give them flexible foundations for their self-making than the supernatural fantasies of adaptable skills schooled into the supposedly stable of their being."[13]

Postmodern studies bring changes to qualitative research methodologies: research work and texts apprehend a plurality of different identities or voices associated with different groups, or individuals; single participant may perform multiple representations; phenomena can be presented using a variety of modes and media, and different sorts of descriptive language; 'command of different theoretical perspectives' and 'strong familiarity with the critique of ... these' on the part of researcher (reflexivity). This leads to the possibility of 'openness and different sorts of reading to surface in the research (flexibility).[14] Above all, researchers in the postmodern era focus on the construction of their research rather than the description of their research whereas modernist researchers are satisfied with faithfully describing and uncovering the goals of inquiry through objective methods or techniques although the object of their research is a human subject.

Feminism, which also has a unique research agenda, is a particular school that reflects aforementioned features in postmodernism and develops particular agendas through deconstructive methods and reconstructive attempts. Patriarchy is seen as one of the major issues in feminist studies and a social system in which fathers have authority over women, children, and property and thus society is organized and operated in

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[13] Stronach, *Educational Research Undone*, 84.

[14] Mats Alvesson and Kaj Skoldberg, *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research* (London: SAGE, 2000), 194-95.

androcentric authority. This mechanism is composed of male power and privilege and women's subordination, creating the template-male=superiority and female=inferiority. Therefore, feminists aim to reveal masculine manifestations, and critically analyze its implications for the goal of gender equality, defining patriarchy as an unjust social construction that oppresses and dominates women.

In spite of the progress being made in terms of improving equal opportunities and rights for women, the mindset regarding underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes and let alone women's participation in public sectors such as parliament, governmental, and in political arenas brings about gender discrimination. In particular, Dorothea Olkowski challenges the objectifying representation of metaphysical being or identity that has marked the Western history through Gille Deleuze's logic of difference that leads one to the 'ruin of representation' or the overturning of hierarchically operated time and space.[15] The world is never known directly, but is constructed, or given meaning through practice and concept in terms of power dynamics. In that sense, such meanings are historically and culturally conditional, dependent upon the legitimate process of dominant discourse embodied in differing communities of practice.

Above all, the logic of difference by Deleuze can be used as a tool with which women are able to refuse to be a place and receptacle imposed by men by bringing the demise or crisis to the concept of representation. It also can be used as a critical practice of reading for points of contradiction within a text in order to subvert a unified voice or

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[15] Dorothea Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 11-15.

taken for granted by empirical science as an object for study.[16] How can one apply the logic of difference to researches? In order to mirror emancipation from gendered exigencies and the resultant suffering of all women, feminist researchers use such concepts as diversity, difference, and plurality within the problematic of general persuasion to challenge such notions as otherness, difference, conflict, or discontinuity that have promoted the exclusion of women or the marginalized. In that sense, feminist researchers find the skeptical side or concepts as well as reconstructive or affirmative concepts in the postmodern spirit. The various forms and features of postmodernism might bring disorientation and vagueness or even absence of moral parameters, or societal chaos to this world. Where does one live?

We are in a very different world, then, form proposed by common sense or scientific reason, where language merely reflects, or corresponds to, a pre-existing reality. This new world, which is not one but many, is the product of 'linguistic turn' that has spread like a virus through the disciplines of the social sciences and the humanities eating away at the boundaries between them, and unsettling old, humanistic narratives of truth, progress, and emancipation.[17]

<div align="center">Key Features</div>

Collaboration, Interdisciplinary, and Agency

"Narrative inquiry is a way of understanding experience. It is collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and social

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[16] Olkowski, *Gilles Deleuze and the Ruin of Representation*, 77-78.

[17] Margaret MacLure, *Discourse in Educational and Social Research* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2003), 4.

interaction with milieus."[18] The narrative research prefers collaboration, mutuality of

researchers and participants to interpretive boundaries, and the participants' stories, rather

than through a conventional literature review or theoretical framework and objectification

of subjects and anticipated outcomes. Such features as trust, mutuality, and reciprocity of

both parties in the narrative inquiry are encouraged because they influence research

findings and process. In particular, the narrative research may involve some mutual self-

disclosure seen as part and parcel of mutual creative meaning making in which

researchers might preemptively share aspects of themselves in response to participants or

other researchers' stories. Thus, active collaboration between researchers, between

researchers and research partners, between participants and their personal environments,

and interdisciplinary integration and discussion among various disciplines are encouraged

while collecting and analyzing data.[19]

Intentionality of storytellers or participants is viewed as "part of the way that

actions and events connote meaning-both for those telling the stories and for those

hearing them. Thus, narrative inquiry also incorporates human agency, consciousness,

subjectivity, purpose, and motivations."[20] The stories or narratives are the closest way to

share their experience with others. Stories are also ways to show who they are and what

they have done by speaking a personal and social history, and responsible ways to make

choices, and to a degree at least, determine their own behavior. Significantly, researchers

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[18] D. Jean Clandinin and E. Michael Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), 20.

[19] John W. Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2007), 61-71.

[20] Larry S. Luton, *Qualitative Research Approaches for Public Administration* (Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2010), 60.

in this methodology must respect others' or participants' choices beyond the temptation

to control, direct, push, and manipulate the research results, admitting uncertainty and

complexity of context, interdependence and relationships between researchers and the

researched.

Universality of Narratives

Frank Rogers repeatedly stresses that human beings are stories so they live storied

lives. To be human is to be a subject.[21] Narrative is composed of reality as well as

identity and subjectivity. Catherine Riessman borrows the quote from Roland Barthes to

describe the universality of stories:

> Narrative is present in myth, legend, fable, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama,
> comedy, mime, painting... stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news items,
> and conversation. Moreover, under this almost infinite diversity of forms,
> narrative is present in every age, every place, and every society.[22]

Indeed, one cannot deny that narratives are everywhere so they are unlimited and

beyond generational and cultural boundaries in their variety, and by providing a common

point of entry into people's experience. Besides, telling stories is natural part of life,

relationships, and communication with others so adults and children alike enjoy sharing

stores with different audiences in various settings in their day-to-day encounters.

Although stories are limited to culture or context, the "story of a life is also more than the

life, the shapes and meaning metaphorically extending to others, others seeing themselves,

knowing themselves through another's life story, arriving where they started and

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[21] Rogers, *Finding God in the Graffiti*, 112.

[22] Catherine Kohler Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008), 4.

knowing the "place for the first time"[23] as long as life is on going. In this way, narrative research holds an everyday, normal form of data from their lived stories.

Good news is that stories are everywhere and everybody can tell their stories. In spite of that, telling a story is closely linked to power, authority, and domination. In that sense, De Lauretis warns that the universality of narrative might be the mechanism to oppress and confine women to certain areas when women are subject to vulnerability of their certain use and determination of narratives. Her pointing out to limitation of the universality of narrative shows paradox of narrative, but the idea of the universality of narrative has their self-justification in that narratives or storytelling also can be a means to empower the marginalized groups including women to engage in the process of questioning, discerning, and taking action to hold their right for the universality of stories and more knowledge-making power.[24]

Narrative Accounts

In general, stories used in narrative inquiry are related to the auto/biographical approaches in that it is effective in gaining the broad understanding about aspects of the social world as well as individual life. Jerome Bruner makes claims that any narration of a life story or auto/biographical story proceeds along the lines of some sort of narrative plot with along different interpretive lines of autographical writers. John Sturrock asserts Bruner's claims through the definition about an autobiography:

> An autobiography is not and cannot be a way of simply signifying or referring to a 'life as lived'. ...On this view, a life is created or constructed by the act of

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[23] Richardson, *Fields of Play*, 6.

[24] Martin McQuillan, "Introduction:Aporias of Writing:Narrative Subjectivity," in *The Narrative Reader*, ed. Martin McQuillan (London: Routledge, 2000), 6.

autobiography. It is a way of constructing experience- and of reconstructing and reconstructing it until our breath and our pen fails us. Construal and reconstrual are interpretive... Obliviously, the, there is no such thing as a 'uniquely' true, correct or even faithful autobiography.[25]

In a word, people participate in telling their life stories regarding their lives in such different ways as metaphors, symbols, poetic words, associating diverse events, experiences, and perceptions. While people come through the process of their telling of, affirming, modifying the stories based on their lived experience, and making new stories, they are given opportunities to shape, construct, and perform their self. Accordingly, what researchers use narrative or storytelling as qualitative data in the creative way contains that the focus of their work goes to the subjects' voice and their self. That is why researchers are as interested in the 'how' of storytelling as they are in 'what' of storytelling or in the narrative practices by which storytellers make use of available resources to construct their selves.[26]

A person may tell different stories or various versions about the same thing. Human beings live in multiple and complex realities as multiple selves including the fluid self engage in the formation of historical, social, situational, and personal self, and all of these features come into play in research context. More importantly, all of these features refer to their own voices.[27] As narrative inquiry researchers get into the process of any

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[25] John Sturrock, "Theory Versus Autobiography," in The Culture of Autobiography: Constructions of Self-Representation, ed., Robert Folkenflik (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), 36-38.

[26] Norman K. Denzin, "Politics of Evidence," Denzin and Lincoln, The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research, 653.

[27] Yvonna S. Lincoln, Susan A. Lynham, and Egon G. Guba, "Paradigmatic Controversie, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences, Revisited," in Denzin and Lincoln, The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research, 124.

account or interpretation and investigate the various effects that have painted both

research participants stories and researchers' interpretation of their stories, narrative

inquiry can make contribution to discovering their hidden self and bringing

transformation to their self and their communities. That is why wounded storytellers can

empower others when they tell their stories and someone's testimonies might mobilize a

nation against social injustice, repression, and violence, leading them into collective

stories that can form the basis of a social movement as well. For that reason, telling the

stories of marginalized people can help create a public space where they are allowed to

speak their voices, asking others to hear the stories of the marginalized.[28]

Narrative Can Be Both the Content and the Methodology Under the Study

It is important to recognize narrative is used not only as data or the field texts for

any particular research project but also narratives and stories as contents, and a tool to get a

sense of what people are working on or thinking about.[29] Thus, data can be the narrative

accounts that researchers gather in their search for information from their human subjects

or from other sources such as written questionnaires and spoken in-depth interviews.

Jerome Bruner turns toward the ways that human beings think about, make sense of, and

tell about the world, and how storytelling endows experience with meaning through the

dichotomy of paradigmatic vs. narrative modes. Pragmatic cognition is concerned with

universals, empiricist reason, and proof, while narrative mode focuses on how the

particular and specific contribute to the whole. Bruner as a social constructivist is more

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[28] Susan E. Chase, "Narrative Inquiry: Still a Field in the Making," in Denzin and Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 415.

[29] Norman K. Denzin, "Politics of Evidence," in Denzin and Lincoln, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 651.

interested in the narrative mode in which human beings "can create hypotheses that will

accommodate virtually anything [they] encounter" and lead clues toward only realistic

modes of expression.[30] As aforementioned, narrative accounts tend to reflect participants'

subjectivities, contextual circumstances, and mutuality among events under the wider

influence and currency of the post-modernist notions. For these reasons, researchers will

choose this research method as the most effective approach for communicating data that is

multivalent and dynamic.

Marginality

"The combination of theory and research with practice as an explicit aim to

understand the world and then change it disrupts and challenges the hierarchies of power

that exist between the researcher and those being researched."[31] Feminist researches

based on feminist interviewing pay attention to challenging power and oppression of the

marginalized ignored by and excluded from the existing context. In that sense, narrative

research methodology meets the requirements of feminist research methodology. In a

word, narrative inquiry is the methodology appropriate in listening to the voices of

women or the marginalized within their cultural context, validating experiences that

otherwise would remain undocumented, establishing an open, subjective positioning of

the research as part of this community. Narrative inquiry also seeks to contribute positive

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[30] Jerome S. Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986), 51.

[31] Jennie Munday, "The Practice of Feminist Focus Groups," in *Feminist Research Practice: A Primer*, eds. Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Lina Leavy (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2007), 237.

change within the community being researched.[32] Conditions of marginality also can

become its strength for the marginalized individuals when the researchers in narrative

inquiry pay attention to the voices that have not been heard in terms of dominant cultures

and power dynamics.

Narrative Interviews

Like other forms of qualitative research, narrative inquiry gains data through

interview. Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey use Atkinson and Silverman's quote to

claim humans dwell in interview society that affirms that human beings are the speaking

subjects and self-revealing subjects based on discourse and subjectivity: "the use of

interviewing to acquire information is so extensive today that it has been said that we live

in an "interview society."[33] How is interviewing in narrative inquiry different from

interviewing in other research methodologies? Previous conventional types of interview

methods are characterized by hierarchical relationship between interviewers and

interviewees and put emphasis on predetermined set of questions that are given to the

interviewees as just respondents, and the possible manipulation of the conceptual

grounding gained by interview questions. In opposed to it, narrative interviews envisage a

setting that encourages interviewees to tell their story about some significant events in

their personal and communal context. It also has the potential and technique to

outperform epistemological or methodological complexity so that it brings reconstruction

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[32] Sharlene Nagy Hesse-Biber and Patricia Lina Leavy, "Feminist Approaches to In-Depth Interviewing," Hesse-Biber and Leavy, *Feminist Research Practice*, 201-03.

[33] Andrea Fontana and James H. Frey, "The Interview: From Neutral Stance to Political Involvement," in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd ed, eds. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2005), 698.

of subject's perspectives and representation of their stories through interviews. As a result, narrative interview can be used as a critique of the existing interview.[34]

Besides, narrative interviewing or narrative in qualitative interviews becomes much less structured unlike the existing interview methodology, and value differences and diversity in the research process. Narrative interviewing might bring about the therapeutic effects and thus play a role in transforming the problems on interviewees' life, revising their self by making sense of their past, and determining the meanings and representations of their life and experience by getting through the process of self-reconstruction while being interviewed.[35]

Interestingly, Linda Smith points out how Western researchers have biased, domesticated, and colonized non-Westerns and their assumptions. According to her, the context and voices of informants with whom Western researchers worked have excluded from their research work and the colonial activities by Westerns have been justified as inevitable events through history. "Conquest and then migration were integral to indigenous patterns of settlement it suggested that these were nature and universal processes of human settlement which, under Western modes of colonization, were much more civilized and humane."[36]

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[34] Fontana and Frey, "The Interview: From Neutral Stance to Political Involvement," in *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd ed, 695-99

[35] Jane Elliott, *Using Narrative in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2005), 141–42.

[36] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), 87.

Procedures of Narrative Research Method

Clandinin and Connelly note, qualitative analysis "has its own rhythms and sequences, and each narrative inquirer needs to work them out for her or his own inquiry," but the narrative research procedures might be a challenging question to answer.[37] Catherine Riessman presents in the research process a model of stages from the experience and situation of the telling of story through the steps of analysis from listening, attending, transcribing, analyzing, and interpreting to identify themes emerging from the data and to capture stores of the participants. The three stages-telling, transcribing, analyzing-of narrative method will be discussed in this section.[38]

Telling

Narrative researchers collect data that is open-ended on behalf of the research participants' account of events. Steiner Kvale identifies researchers' stance toward their interview metaphorically as "miner" and "travelers" in his book, *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interview* (1996).

The two metaphors-of the interviewer as a miner or as a traveler- represent different concepts of knowledge formation. Each metaphor stands for alternative genres and has different rules of the game. In broad sense, the miner metaphor pictures a common understanding in modern social sciences of knowledge as "given." The traveler metaphor refers to a postmodern constructive understanding that involves a conversational approach to social research. The miner metaphor brings interviews into

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[37] Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*, 97.

[38] Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*, 54-60.

the vicinity of human engineering; the traveler metaphor into the vicinity of the

humanities and art.[39]

Researchers in the miner approach assume that ideas and knowledge exist within

the subject of the interview whereas researchers in the traveler are "on a journey to a

distant country with interview partners, either into unknown terrain or with maps"[40] to

collect stories and to re-story. These contrasting metaphors of miner and traveler are

linked to the notion of the self as collection of schemas to be minded or a story to be

understood and constructed via travels through another's narrative world. Whether

researchers are travelers or miners, it is important for them to provide a safe environment

to encourage participants to open their mind and tell complete stories about important

moments in their lives. Open-ended questions, which permit interviewees to construct

answers collaboratively with researchers in ways that they find meanings, are suggested.

Yes or no questions also can elicit a complete narrative as long as researchers are open to

that kind of response.[41]

Similarly, Ira Progoff describes how people can be the designers of their own

development and their inner life through the concept of the process mediation. The

process mediation refers to a methodology for the finest creation being their own self that

provides through a context of principles and a variety of procedures for opening channels

of connection between individuals' processes and the spiritual teachings, and traditions of

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[39] Steinar Kvale, *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1996), 5.

[40] Catherine Marshall, *Designing Qualitative Research*, 5th ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), 144.

[41] Kvale, *Interviews*, 3-5.

their past.[42] Significantly, this process brings to individuals the themes that can be the

grand or meta narratives in their life, acting "as a self-adjusting compass, seeking the true

north, the special meaning and direction of each individual life"[43] so that it serves as a

catalyst to create fresh experiences within the framework of old beliefs that had been

routines.[44] The following stages outline that Amia Lieblich et al. introduce is an attempt

to maintain a balance between the need to obtain a complete and rich life story and the

practical limitations of time and data. Basically, their theory of interviewing practice and

instructions lead interviews or participants to focus on four questions or directions for

each stage:

1. Tell me about a significant episode or a memory that you remember from   this
   stage.
2. What kind of a person were you during this stage?
3. Who were significant people for you during this stage, and why?
4. What is your reason for choosing to terminate this stage when you did?[45]

Transcribing

Data can be in such forms as field notes, journal records, interview transcripts,

one's own and other's observation, storytelling, autobiographical writing, letter,

documents and pictures.[46] When researchers engage in listening to and reading the

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[42] Ira Progoff, *The Practice of Process Meditation: The Intensive Journal Way to Spiritual Experience* (New York: Dialogue House Library, 1980), 85.

[43] Ira Progoff, *At a Journal Workshop: Writing to Access the Power of the Unconscious and Evoke Creative Ability* (Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, 1992), 7.

[44] Progoff, *Practice of Process Meditation*, 85.

[45] Amia Lieblich, Rivka Tuval-Mashiach, and Tamar Zilber, *Narrative Research: Reading, Analysis and Interpretation* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1998), 25-26.

[46] F. Michael Connelly and D. Jean Clandinin, "Stories of Experience and Narrative Inquiry," *Educational Researcher* 19, no. 5 (June 1, 1990): 5.

conversations with participants, they take in what is being said and compare it with their personal understandings, investigating about how the stories of interviewees make sense together rather than filling any gaps with the existing scholarly work. Namely, researchers document experience based on the told-stories in their own words from field texts. In this process, researchers and participants come to reach a joint subjective understanding of narratives that occur during research process, by creating the space where nonjudgmental attitude, warmth, empathy are encouraged.[47] Especially when participants are women or the marginalized, researchers should pay attention to how they can create comfortable atmospheres that encourage them to share their experience as well as the problems that they are facing.

After collecting data, transcribing with close attention to the representation is absolutely important in narrative inquiry. For transcription, Riessman suggests researchers "begin with a rough transcription, a first draft of the entire interview that gets the words and other striking features of the conversation on paper (ex: crying, laughing, very long pause)."[48] Then, she asks researchers to go back to the place for re-transcription. When researchers re-transcribe the specific contents that they transcribed for later analysis, they may actually find changes or new insights as a result of the researchers' close attention to the stories of participants. In that sense, this exemplifies the dialogical nature of the narrative interview.

After narratives or stories are identified, researchers go into some coding work or "parsing" of the transcription and re-transcription. Every well-formed story has a

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[47] Connelly and Clandinin, "Stories of Experience," 12

[48] Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*, 56.

common set of elements. Riessman uses Lavoz's paradigm to see how simple narratives are organized, to review, and interpret any of a number of proposed story structures. Each clause has a definite purpose: "to provide an abstract for what follows (A), orient the listener (O), to carry the complicating action (CA), to evaluate its meaning (E), and to resolve the action (R)."[49] Although many scholars accept Labov's work as paradigmatic, "there are few rules for partitioning more complex stretches from interviews that feel like narrativizations" in that such elements as culture or context and researchers' overall framework can serve as a greater variation[50] in story structure and pattern by Labov and thus, bring about different results in parsing the same text.

Analyzing

As described already, stories can be viewed as a window into predictable reality and analyzed using concepts derived from the data. Since "narrative analysis views life as constructed and experienced through the telling and re-telling of the story, and the analysis is the creation of a coherent and resonant story,"[51] it places values on lived experience of the participants rather than seek agreements across conceptual themes from stories. As "self-disclose becomes an integral aspect of mutual creative meaning-making" between researchers and interviewees or participants rather to enrich each other than

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[49] Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*, 56.

[50] Ibid., 60.

[51] Kim Etherington, *Becoming a Reflexive Researcher Using Our Selves in Research* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2004), 81.

being separate activity carried out after data collection,[52] narrative analysis becomes the

process of meaning-making and the process of narrative construction.

There are different forms of narrative analysis. Some may focus on content of

stories and others on meaning. Bruner provides two models, paradigmatic and narrative

cognition as described earlier. The paradigmatic type is a textual or structural analysis in

which stories are analyzed for criteria that would put them in one or the other category,

and thus reinforce assumptions. In the meantime, the narrative cognition aims to put its

meaningfulness on stories, ringing true or the qualities of "verisimilitude" or

"lifelikeness."[53] Lieblich et al. observe that "two main independent dimensions emerge-

those of (a) holistic versus categorical approaches and (b) content versus form" in reading,

interpreting, and analyzing life stories and narratives,[54] recognizing Bruner's modes of

cognition. The holistic versus categorical approaches take the life story of participants as

a whole, and interpret them in the context of other parts of the narrative, emphasizing a

thematic analysis of the narrative to capture a holistic understanding of unique

individuals. The second dimension, content versus form refers to the traditional

dichotomy in reading texts. The content may amount to the exterior contents such as what

took place; who they were; how they reacted. In contrast, the form is concerned with

stories that focus on the following questions: how the plot of the story is structures and

how the sequence of the event. [55] Using what kinds of languages or expresses is

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[52] Robert Shaw, *The Embodied Psychotherapist: The Therapist's Body Story* (Hove, UK: Brunner-Routledge, 2003), 59.

[53] Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, 97.

[54] Lieblich, Tuval-Mashiach, and Zilber, *Narrative Research*, 12.

[55] Ibid., 12-15.

important because particular language and phrases may affect participants' states of mind that can bring about the risks or benefits of the research.

For the analysis of narrative, Riessman introduces Labov's six categories for a desirable narrative structure: an abstract (summary of the substance of the narrative), orientation (time, place, situation, and participants), complicating action (sequence of events), evaluation (significant and meaning of the action, attitude of the teller), and coda (returns the perspective to the present). Such elements can be a basis to assess whether the stories of participants have social meaning for the participants and the stories of participants have meaning for researchers.[56]

In analyzing data, one of the tasks of a more inclusive human science is to point out how the reclaimed concepts apply in a more open research model. All in all, researchers are able to produce reliable, plausible, credible results from the open and inter-subjective research beyond mathematical and logical certainty when they fully recognize and utilize features of narrative research: openness to competing interpretation; see narratives of lives in process; "the disconnected and independent events and actions are interpreted as parts of the contextual whole story."[57]

Strengths and Weaknesses

Narrative inquiry is an attractive, complex methodology that has its pros and cons. One of the most obvious strengths of narrative studies is that it can provide a holistic picture, which produces rich information about a variety of phenomena and events. As

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[56] Riessman, *Narrative Analysis*, 18.

[57] Lisa K. Beach, *A Narrative Inquiry Exploring the Experiences of Women Who Place High Priority on Their Health* (PhD diss., Walden University, 2008), 21.

aforementioned, religious communities themselves are composed of their stories or narratives. Narratives are never-ending so researchers can gain never-ending data by posing the questions on, revisiting, and reinterpreting the issues, expecting to discover new variables, and giving voices to researchers as long as they work on the stories of participants lived experience, although they may have already been studied. These strengths of narrative inquiry support researchers to challenge the dominant narratives and privileged ideologies, transforming the 'taken-for-granted' unlike traditional or classical research methodologies.

The collaboration and mutuality between researchers and participants and among various disciplines used in narrative inquiry encourage researchers to study a limited number of cases and persons, understand some topics in depth, and capture familiar data, which fills in some information that is lacking with quantitative researches.[58] Finding common threads within the narrative data is to compel researchers as well as readers to grow in their thinking, challenge their old beliefs, and seek paradigm shifts against the dominant modes of thinking.

No research method is without limitations, and narrative methodology is no exception. The data may be fake, deceptive, fictional dishonest, and too subjective or too fictional. Accordingly, it is hard for a researcher to fully disclose the nature of the study when she or he works with the participants who honestly do not speak and researchers cannot view the data as truth.[59] Fiction or fabrication may be switched for the meaning and narrative truth with the same criteria that provide significance, value, and intention.

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[58] Webster, *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method*, 88.

[59] Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*, 10.

Accordingly, one cannot say that narrative inquiry is appropriate for all studies or for large numbers of participants due to the time consuming that is required. Herein, it is important to establish the criteria for the purposes of avoiding falsehood or fakeness of stories by paying attention to the validity and reliability of research document that they want to produce and encounter, and reflexivity and ethical sensitivity to all forms of expression.[60]

Narrative research is a methodology that helps researchers in reading analyzing, and interpreting narrative data as well as contents gained from participants. Nonetheless, "no comprehensive models systematically mapping the variety of existing methods of reading narratives"[61] and "there is no standard of procedures compared to some forms of qualitative analysis."[62] As a result, the use and usability of narratives as evidenced statements on a topic involves the likelihood of personal opinion from a researcher's point of view. There is no special criterion to distinguish the truth from the false or fake stories and data and researchers' personal biases and subjectivity may influence the findings. The close relationship between researchers and participants might be one of strong points of narrative inquiry. However, the closeness between the researcher and participants also poses a problem in that it may create unintended influences on objectivity and data interpretation.[63]

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[60] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 3rd ed (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2009), 189.

[61] Lieblich, *Narrative Research*, 6.

[62] Paul S. Gray, "Exchange and Access in Field Work," in *SAGE Qualitative Research Methods* eds., Paul Atkinson and Sara Delamont (London: SAGE, 2010), 201.

[63] Clandinin and Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry*, 22.

As Chase observes, narrative experts view narrative as a distinct form of discourse: as "retrospective meaning making-the shaping or ordering of past experience, a way of understanding one's own or others' actions, of organizing events and objects into a meaningful whole, of connecting and seeing the consequences of actions and events over time... by maintaining a focus on narrated lives."[64] Participants cannot remember their past daily life unless their memory retention is big or what they have experienced has been nothing special or significant enough to remember, so their stories cannot reflect some aspects of the original real time experience. Correspondingly, it still needs to be open to analysis and interpretation regarding where meaning is being presented, securitizing the methods employed by narrators in arriving at their stories and lives.

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[64] Chase, "Narrative Inquiry: Stll a Field in the Making," in Denzin and Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook*, 421

Chapter Six

Research Design and Analysis of Qualitative Data

<u>Research Design</u>

This study draws on autobiographical, narrative, in-depth interviews based on flexibility of dialogue among participants, researchers, and literature review. Therefore, this dissertation includes recruiting participants, organizing a meeting with them, conducting the interviews and the development of a series of analysis process.

Participants

Kadar Parahoo defines samples as "the total number of units from which data can be collected" and as one of all the elements that meet the principles for inclusion in a study.[1] To celebrate the insight, the richness, and complexity inherent in the narrative inquiry, I put consideration on such components as the geographical location, profession, age, economic level, and educational background in recruiting research subjects.

I accessed to fourteen women active in Korean Protestant churches in Korea and the United States of America through personal relationships. One woman gave up interview in the midst of conversation with me, because she did not like some questions related to feminist perspectives. The two interviews with two young women aged 20s and 30s were conducted. When I started conducting interviews with these two young women, their answers to my questions were filled with the following: "I do not know the answer

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[1] Kader Parahoo, *Nursing Research: Principles, Process and Issues* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 1997), 218.

to that questions" or "I never thought about it." To find answers from them, I kept asking,

"Why not think about it?," but their responses were the same back, "I do not know."

Therefore, I decided that their interviews could not use as the data. The two women who

live in Korea emailed the written interviews because of their time issues. I contacted 14

women but used field notes gained from 11 women living in Korea and America as data.

Someone might ask how I can overcome the gap that different context of participants

might bring to this study when I recruited Korean Christian women belonging to Korean

congregations in Korea as well as the United States for my study. I suppose that the

women in Korean communities of faith in Korean and the United States have similar

problems and context. In that Korean Christian women experience the exclusion from

leadership position; their religious activities are confined to private areas, regardless of

where they live, I would say that where the communities of faith are logistically located

does not influence the research results.

The summary of the participants is as follows:

	Anonym	Age	Education	Occupation	Experience of Other Religions	Denomination
1	A	46	College	Housewife	Lifetime Christian	Methodist
2	B	48	College	Publishing	Lifetime Christian	Methodist
3	C	44	College	Religious organization	Lifetime Christian	Presbyterian
4	D	45	College	Movie company	Lifetime Christian	Presbyterian
5	E	45	College	Insurance company	Buddhism/ Christianity	Non-denomination
6	F	43	College	Middle school teacher	Buddhism/ Christianity	Baptist
7	G	46	Graduate	Counselor	Christianity	Presbyterian
8	H	48	Graduate	Radio anchor	Buddhism/ Christianity	Non-denomination
9	I	47	Graduate	Social worker	Buddhism/ Catholic	Baptism

| 10 | J | 49 | College | Bank supervisor | Lifetime Christian | Methodist |
| 11 | K | 48 | Junior College | Housewife | Lifetime Christian | Methodist |

The women with whom I conducted interviews attend mainline Protestant churches or communities of faith with established denominations that have been aware in some ways. This phenomena reflects Korean Christian world that grapples with the issues of occults and cults that imitate Christianity, but deviate from the central, historic truths of biblical Christianity with antisocial problems in Korean Christian context. This fear makes them prefer conventional communities of faith that are characterized by conservative and exclusive views against secular society and something different from them and the lack of diversity that causes intolerant and exclusive attitudes regarding other religions in Korean context although Korean is a multi-religious society.

As the above diagram indicates, many of participants were raised in church and currently play a major role in the activities of their congregations. Some experienced Buddhism for a while before becoming sincere Christians. I tried to gain data from the participants by listening to their voices and stories. Working with participants with diverse background and life experience brought about richness to the study so that I attempted to recruit my research partners by considering such components as their educational, economic, and occupation. Unfortunately, such desire and efforts in that direction were not satisfied. By chance, my research participants were mostly college graduates or graduates or those with equivalent degree. Their access to higher education

reflects "the national obsession with education" or "their education fever" in Korean[2] as well as American context.

I realized that most of the women who were willing to get involved in the this study are in their forties after I met with them, though I attempted to recruit participants from a wide age range. After I conducted interviews with them, I became aware that the participants were in their forties, graduated from college-level school, had the same marriage status, and were all middle class. My previous experience told that those women on the margins who have rarely experienced the chance to speak before others tended to avoid their feelings of exposure, so I wanted to conduct the research partners who were willing to share their life experience and stories for my research. Thankfully, the women in my study were willing to participate in being interviewed and shared their experience regarding family, social, and religious life stories. The fact that women who did not hesitate to speak their voice, in a sense, might help me interpret as a sign that Korean women get into the transitional process in which the they have become more outspoken about their freedom and choice.

Korean women aged 20s to 30s in Korean society put more energy and time to settle their life and adapt themselves to such life events as marriage, occupation, childcare, and housework in patriarchal society rather than who they are in their family, society, and communities of faith.[3] That is my interpretation that my participants are in their forties. Unlike determining the sample size for quantitative research, "there are no

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[2] Michael J. Seth and Education Research Complete, *Education Fever Society, Politics,and the Pursuit of Schooling in South Korea* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2002), 9.

[3] Women's Institute of Korean National University, "Indepth Studies of Korean Women in their 20-30s for Life Friendly Policy Development," (Korea Ministry of Employment and Labor, 2010) 8-15. I ttranslated this Korean research paper into English.

rules in determining sample size in qualitative inquiry" so determining the sample size

for qualitative researches may be less structured and depends on research approaches and

the need for appropriate data with the resources necessary to collect.[4] This study might

show the homogeneity in their ethnicity, education level, age, and socio-economic

aspects. Despite sampling homogeneity of this study, a group of eleven women met the

saturation point for this qualitative research. The women's names mentioned in this

dissertation are pseudonyms to protect their identity and keep the confidentiality I

promised to the participants through verbal expression as well as consent form. This

pseudonym was used throughout this dissertation, in any forms of analysis notes, and

report, and publication related to this research.

Interview

The flexibly semi-structured questionnaires based on narrative interview or in-

depth interview with an autobiographical storytelling were designed for the interviews.

The interviews lasted about one and a half to two hours: the first part was the stories and

their meaning about their self-agency or independence at home, society, and communities

of faith; the second part focused on narrative or storytelling regarding their subjectivity in

relation to the relationships with God, and in terms of Biblical text, and religious

activities. There was no break time between the first part and the second part.

I contacted each participant one-week in advance to arrange the place, time, date

to meet, and duration of interview. Interviews were conducted in a place and time that

participants preferred.

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[4] Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, 3 ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2002), 244.

Some of them chose their own house where they felt comfortable while others

café or restaurant at their request. There were neither disadvantages nor interruptions in

home as well as café or restaurant. At first, there were nervous feelings in these women,

because they were not familiar with being interviewed or telling their own stories. Many

of them said that they were asked by their pastors to help my research by being

interviewed. They anticipated that the questions that I designed might be about the issues

regarding faith and Biblical message, rather than their stories that they meet in their

church life. However, when they were asked to tell their stories according the semi-

structured questionnaires from feminist theological perspectives, they seemed to be

perplexed, but were excited about the opportunity for conversation. When the questions

with feminist points of view were given to one woman, she felt too disturbed and upset to

answer those questions and she wanted stop being interviewed.

For ethical issues, each participant was briefly informed about research purpose,

thesis, type of interview, questions, and how their interview date would be used etc. They

signed the consent form after reading each item including confidentiality and being told

that they were allowed to stop the interview or answering any question anytime. I made

the two consent forms so one was given to them and one was kept by my file.

A group of questions were given to all participants to weave their life story with

freedom, time, and authority to tell their stories, express their emotion, and explore their

inner self or narrative self, and agency. I tried my best to avoid controlling the interview

as a researcher, paying my respect to their stories. There was neither a time limit nor

limitation in their storytelling. Thus, when each participant seemed to have completed her

telling stories, the interview was brought to an end. Then, the whole interview concluded

with my thanks to them for their precious time and sharing their experience stories. While I conducted interviews with theses women, ten women had tears in their eyes when they shared their unhappy childhood memories that were subject to prejudice, stereotype, domestication, and discrimination as daughters, mothers, and daughters-in-law in Confucian familial context. I also cried while having conversation with them, taking notes, and recording their stories.

Making Notes

I used a computer to make notes during interviewing participants. I put down their own words or expression, and comments that I felt by observing their gesture, facial expressions, and the flow of their emotion. In fact, note taking is an important activity, but it might distract the conversation between the participants and the researcher. Therefore, I tried my best not to create the interruption and distraction that my note taking might cause. In spite of that, making notes was a beneficial tool to help me capture and hold what they told me, non-verbal expressions, and any atmosphere in conversational setting that audiotape could not do.

The interview was simultaneously recorded by making notes. Recording the interview process and contents acts as a back-up of data. Permission to use the audiotape was sought before the interview. All the participants did not pay attention to recording their voices. The audiotape recorder was positioned close enough between the participants and me to record our conversation. The audiotape recording and making notes helped me save the field data obtained by interview, enhancing my memory retention for analysis. After 11 interviews, about 40 pages of notes were taken.

Analysis

The analysis included a series of processes such as transcriptions, making theory

notes, thematic classification. I tried to transcribe all interviews as full as possible.

Thick description was performed when I transcribed. A thick description,

according to John Creswell, "means that the researcher provides details when describing

a case or when writing about a theme… a description is rich if it provides abundant

interconnected details. Detail can emerge through physical description, movement

description, and activity description."[5] As a result, I endeavored to write the narratives,

accounts, ideas of the participants, their meaning or intentions, the research setting,

process, and the transactions, and the researcher's conceptual development. This revealed

common characteristics, themes, and patterns. Based on the notes and the transcripts, I

broke the interview into subtopics, noting subtitles for them, categorizing the accounts

according to the content of the participants' story, and describing their story through

interpretation. In the next stage, their social, theological, educational understandings of

gender and the patriarchal messages passed down and internalized by them are unpacked

and the images and themes used were highlighted.

The interview data and the literature regarding women's self-agency and narrative

were used to trace what women learn, absorb, apply, and maintain in their congregations

and understand their gendered self and context or their freedom discovered in the

coherency of their faith and their life narratives. I initially attempted to find what it means

to be a Korean Christian woman in Confucian culture; how exclusion from leadership

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[5] Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design*, 252.

position of women and lack of self-agency with voiceless and faceless of women influence women's life, and then how narratives or telling their stories empowers them to bring about gender inclusive transformation to their understanding personal life and congregation; finally how nurturing women to reclaim their self-agency is linked to their having better understanding of and rich relationships with God, their self, and faith communities, and others.

Summary and Reflection

Finding a proper methodology for studying women's self-agency and narrative pedagogy proved fairly difficult. As I explored in the previous chapters, I chose narrative inquiry as a methodology for this study in that it reflectes feminist theological perspectives in many ways and adapts the interdisciplinary theory, and values subjective positioning of research partners through building a horizontal relationship between researchers and research partners. It also captures hidden and lost voice of women, validating their experiences, pursuing to contribute positive transformation within the congregation being studied. Furthermore, I made an effort to boost confidence of participants by being an active listener who caught even non-verbal expressions such as silence and encouraged them to talk more. To be sure, research was more time-consuming and labor-intensive than I thought. Nonetheless, I could "document the lives and activities" of Korean Christian women; conceptualize their expression from their points of view; recognize their "behavior as an expression of social contexts"[6]; obtain valuable data and sources to give them a critical lens to discern their gendered contexts

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[6] Shulamit Reinharz, *Feminist Methods in Social Research* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 51.

and negotiate between the submission and deliverance. The crucial and significant data is explained in the following chapters.

Ethical Considerations

Conducting this study was approved from the Institutional Research Board of Claremont School of Theology. I followed three principles of the Belmont Report, namely beneficence, respect for human dignity as well as justice.[7] I was sensitive to the participants' emotions when probing questions that could psychologically harm the participants. I told the participants that if they felt that some parts of the interview were too much for them, they were free to withdraw from interview or choose not to answer the questions. I assured that information that they give me would not be used against them. The researcher should not manipulate or control the relationship between researchers and participants. Their stories were safely stored and will be destroyed one year after the study. The principle of human dignity includes the right to self-determination and full disclosure. Participants have the right to decide whether to participate without incurring any penalty. Participants were approached and the purpose of the study was explained.

Research Biases

Biases can occur in the planning, data collection, analysis, and publication phases of research. In particular, I experienced Korean Christian women as a pastor as well as a religious director at congregations. Besides, I have studied feminist theologies and religious education with feminist perspectives. Thus, I know what it means to be a

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[7] Glifford G. Christians, "Ethics and Politics in Qualitative Research," Denzin and Lincolon, *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd ed., 66–67.

Korean woman in patriarchal culture and how the marriage of culture and religious activities based on emancipatory proclamation in Christ affects the understanding of gender as well as gendered perspectives of God. My experience working with Korean Christian women makes me aware of the cost of remaining patriarchal systems and ensuing problems, confronting and resisting the gender ideology embedded by patriarchal power and andocentric contexts. My personal experience as a Korean Christian woman also might bring biases to my research though I did not intend. In that sense, the literature review and a thorough understanding about participants' stories and the possibility of biases can be a means to reduce or shun the biases that can affect study results and lead to distortion of the findings of the study. As the main probe of the study in the participants' natural environment, I went back to qualitative data gained from research partners to verify and clarify their responses.

Analysis of Field Notes

The in-depth interview and time-consuming analysis provided an opportunity to observe the reality of Korean Christian women's self-identity, social context, and narrative potential. Some findings might not have been examined in previous researches and others might confirm the previous findings. It might be appropriate to present some themes and characteristics that emerged from the interviews before I analyze the outcomes.

First, childhood memories of women passed down and internalized by patriarchy and women's gender ideology have affected women's identity and their understanding about the self. Second, Korean women cannot be decision-makers with respect to their employment and their life or what makes it hard for them to negotiate or reconcile their

roles as mothers and workers. Third, when it comes to women's self-agency, religious activities they participate in and how such activities and theological teachings by congregations contribute to women's spiritual or faith development will be explored. Finally, what can empower Christian women to settle the conflict between patriarchal culture and emancipatory messages of Christianity will be addressed, despite Christianity functioning as the double-edge sword to Korean Christian women. The findings regarding women's voices and stories emerged out of their life experience and perspectives can help religious educators and scholars of religious education to document women's understanding of self-agency and to discern why they need to rework their self without pushing them into further margin or periphery and the secondary position imposed by patriarchy in their congregations.

Their Memories of Women: Preferring Boys to Girls or Andocentric Context

For generations, boys have been preferred to girls in Korean culture, but as I reviewed in chapter two, the recent studies hint that this idea is gender-inclusively changing. In spite of change of the inclination, such notion has affected women's life causing gendered practices. I asked the participants to tell me their childhood memories as a girl without mentioning the practice that boys are preferred to girls. The women in my study brought out unhappy memories recalling how much their parents preferred boys to daughters. J heard from her grandmother that her mother wept when she found out that her new baby (J) was a girl. She talked that "my grandmother made me dress as a boy because she believed that my mom could give birth to a boy if I dressed like as a boy. I really wanted to wear pink skirt and pink hair band and hairpin in my hair but I had never put on when I was young. If I put on skirt, my granny was upset at me." The

following superstition or practice had went around people or especially women who are

eager to have boy babies, reflecting the social context where boys are preferred to girls: if

parents dress daughters as boys or give girls boys' or men's name, they will give birth to

son; if they wear the underwear of the women who gave boys to birth, they would give

birth to a baby boy.[8] H told me that she does not have any brothers so that her mother has

been ill treated by her mother-in-law. H's grandmother, just because she did not give

birth to a boy. H tried to pee like a boy by herself to please her mother and grandmother.

Considering that she had peed like a boy, the gender discrimination was serious to the

extent that the six year-old girl like her recognized a boy might bring happiness, hope,

and peace to their family and her pretending to be a boy might be a way to let a boy come

into her family.

Another episode that the women shared was that men and women were not

allowed to eat together. K said, "men and women didn't sit at the same table. After

fathers completed having food with my grandparents and brothers at the same table, my

mother, sisters and I were called to eat last, picking over the leftovers from men and

boys." According to Confucian value of separation between women and men, "men and

women should not sit together; they should not hand their clothes together; they should

not use the same washcloth or comb."[9] This gendered practice was experienced as

Korean women grew up in Korean context. Some studies report "girls were breastfed for

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[8] Yong-sik Yi, *Shaman Ritual Music in Korea* (Seoul: Jimoondang, 2004), 95-96.

[9] Kim-Renaud, *Creative Women of Korea*, 38.

a significantly shorter period than boys because of a cultural preference for sons."[10] S

also shared her experience about discriminatory treatment from her mother: "my mother

gave my brother nutritious foods and herbal tonic to enhance his growth and resistance to

disease. When I realized that my mother hid delicious and nutritious food for my brother,

I silently wept and defined myself as inferior being."

As the women in this study articulated, all of them experienced discrimination

resulting from the Korean strong tradition preferring a boy to a girl regardless of their

parents' educational, economic, and religious background. Such patriarchal legacy has

hurt women deeply and internationalized the andocentric template - men's superiority vs.

women's inferiority - and "serves to negate women and maintain the framework of male

hegemony, cultural misogyny, and the oppression of women."[11]

Domestication: Not To Be Smart and Not To Be Independent

This second section is not unrelated to the first, the notion of preferring sons to

daughters. Agreeably, parents all over the world pour the natural wish for their children

to have financially secure, happy life into their children from an early age. The problem

is that when parents are interested in their daughter's obedience, wish to have a son in

preference to a daughter, and put their sons in better status than daughters, their wishes

for their children are not the same to the both sexed children. The parents of the women

in my study subconsciously as well as overtly indoctrinated them to take care of or worse,

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[10] Yuko Nakao and Sumihisa Honda, "Early Initiation of Breastfeeding and Its Beneficial Effects in Japan," in *Infant Feeding Practices a Cross-Cultural Perspective*, ed. Pranee Liamputtong (New York: Springer, 2011), 311.

[11] Linda Gordon Howard, "Transforming organizations and the Quality of Life of the people Who Work in Them: In My Own Voice," in *The Psychology of Women at Work: Challenges and Solutions for Our Female Workforce*, ed. Michele Antoinette Paludi (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2008), 9.

serve their husband and deal with the domestic chores like cleaning and cooking. If their

natural wish is for their daughters to focus on their marriage, rather than their holistic life

as a person, their wishes for them functioned as perpetuating the stereotypes of their life

regardless of independence and more equality that are components to achieve their

successful life in their lives.

K talked:

> My parents treated me well but they forced me to do housework since when I was
> seven years old. I had to cook, clean the house, and do laundry etc. that grown-
> ups could do when I was young. (Sigh! She wept.) I was just seven years old...
> How could they expect me to do housework well! Whenever I made mistakes or
> forgot doing something that my parents asked, they punished me a lot. When I
> was young ... My father was a public servant so he did not make money enough
> to take care of the extended family. My mother needed to make money so she ran
> a small grocery store. Other old sisters helped family business but I remembered
> that all housework or house chores were my responsibility. In spite of that, my
> mother allowed me to learn how to play a piano and got me good clothing that I
> wanted, talking that woman must be pretty to marry a good man. Besides, I
> wanted to go to four-year-college-level school but my mother sent me to a junior
> college, saying that 'men don't like smart women so you'd better enroll in a
> junior college. If you graduate from even a junior college, your would-be-husband
> and in-laws won't ignore you.

All of the women in my study grew up listening to the words from their parents

and society that women's fate depends on a good husband so their parents kept reminding

their daughters that 'you may not be smarter than your brothers and husbands.' The

woman (I) in my study got high GPA at high school, so she wanted to attend a medical

school but her father opposed by saying that her smartness might get in the way of her

brothers' going to a good college and doing a good job in the future. C who works for a

religious organization said that her father, a senior pastor, did not allow her to do

extracurricular activities outside school, exhorting that 'be a good girl and marry a

descent man.' As a result, she had to come back home immediately after school so her

range of activities was restricted to her house, school, and church. According to C, what

her father said that 'to be a good girl meant that she had to be virgin until marriage.'

In the context where parents are enthusiastic to look for a male spouse to make

their daughters happy, teaching that marrying a good man was women's best happiness,

women could not share or express their dreams or wishes with their parents and family

members because they got noticed that their wishes were not welcome. Interestingly, H's

parents were poor and had bad relationships each other. In some sense, she grew up under

their neglect. K said:

> My parents had many problems such as bad relationship, financial problems, the
> conflict between my mother and my grandmother (in another word, daughter-in-
> law and mother-in-law), ... Um... many problems. In the situation that it is hard
> for them to survive, they could not take care of my sister and me. Besides, my
> mother had harsh personality so that she never gave us one kind word or praises.
> My sister and I were totally neglected. I read a lot of books when nobody took
> care of myself. I seemed happy to read because I could do anything in books
> because books gave imaginative power, creative vitality, dreams, and hope.

K confessed that their neglect might provide her an impetus to be an experienced

newscaster as well as reporters for a variety of radio broadcast programs and might be

less domesticated by social practice and parents' teaching. The teacher in her middle

school who recognized her voice encouraged K to become an anchor or newscaster. After

that, she envisioned such dream, working hard to achieve her dream though nobody

helped her come true her dream. She achieved what she wanted to do by overcoming

negativity, neglect, and poverty and by getting help from education.

Luckily, K encountered her teacher who was one of "threshold people" or special

mentors or persons that for those mentors or special persons who keep positive and

supportive relationships and give inspiration in their mentees' life.[12] Nine women in my

study said that they did not encounter special persons or mentors to discuss about their

futures or positive role models whom they admired when they grew up. For their

professional work or dreams or wishes. I asked them what their dreams were as children.

They said that they just wanted to be a good mother and wise wife, or teacher, public

servants: no individual dreams. In general, I remembered that my friends used to talking

to each other that they wanted to a president of a nation, scientist or medical doctor,

lawyer or persecutor, etc. Startlingly, the women in my study did not articulate their

dreams or wishes or their role models when it comes to their dream regarding

professional work. The lack of such a dream in their childhood, presumably, young girls

did not find a role-model, mentor or teachers enough to challenge the practices in relation

to gender domestication, when their parents were not interested in developing and

pursuing their daughters' talents or interests, without knowing how their gendered

teaching could be related to self-negativity, passivity, sacrifice, and self-denial of their

daughters.

Women in Korean context did not become aware in their patriarchal society that

their options or choices couldn't help but be limited in some important ways because of

her gender. As Lamothe claims, women just work hard:

> Women in the workforce, to be respected as much as a male must be twice as
> effective and when women and men behave in the same way, men are viewed as
> assertive and productive while women are seen as aggressive and domineering. Is

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[12] Leonisa Ardizzone, *Gettin' My Word Out: Voices of Urban Youth Activists* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007), 82. The terms "threshold people" used by Maria Harris and Daloz Parks means those metors or special persons to help people.

it any wonder that girls who are bright and motivated may become anxious as they mature and realize what limited choice they have?[13]

Thus, what inculcates women to retain the major responsibility for household chores, childbearing, and caring for children has functioned as controlling and domesticating them.

Unsettled Outsiders

I wonder whether one can say that Korean women can make an option of not marrying in their context even though many young Korean women increasingly believe that their marriage is their individual choice than a requirement, rejecting the Confucian requirement of marriage obligatory on women. I asked to the women in my study if their marriage was an option and what the relationship to their parents after marriage looked like. All of them said that their parents domesticated them to the extent that timely marrying a good man and leaving their home was seen as a kind of filial piety that daughters can do for their parents. Their parents thought that their daughters' marrying a man from affluent family and stable jobs was a way of improving their lives so they put meanings on their children's marriage.

The women in my study told that they have found unsettled outsiders in themselves. There is a Korean saying that married daughters are called *chulgaoein*, which implies that daughters are considered 'outsiders' who belong to other family after they are married.[14] F said that "my parents talked all the time that I will become the

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[13] Denise Lamothe, *The Taming of the Chew: A Holistic Guide to Stopping Compulsive Eating* (New York : Penguin Books, 2002), 74.

[14] Keum Young Chung Pang, *Virtuous Transcendence: Holistic Self-Cultivation and Self-Healing in Elderly Korean Immigrants* (New York: Haworth Press, 2000), 184–85.

outsider after marriage who have no right in the matters of their family and for real, my parents and I did not do much together anymore after marriage." Accordingly, one can imagine what it looked like to live as a Korean woman in the context where they were not educated as an independent and subjective person and were not ready to get their professional careers that would enable them to live their own life. The concept of *chulgaoein,* which means a married daughter is no better than a stranger to her natal family still, circulates even today in Korea society, reflecting the desperate state of married women that do not have economic independence and depend on their husband in their life.

I invited them to talk about what put their marital life in danger or trouble in respect with their subjectivity or their dignity. Some of them pointed out that their husband is a decision-maker for their life, and all of them named the conflict between daughters-in-law and mothers-in-law as one of the hardest things in their marital life. It seems to be widespread over the world, as in the past, though the reasons or forms of such conflict might vary in context and culture. In Korean society, this unresolved struggle between the two women, as in the past, was known as one of the common source to break conflict and unhappiness to family. This conflict is not just set aside as personal problems, but just was made for men in the model of either for being a wife or for being a mother. If it is right, it "is commonly related to the mothers-in-law's son's superiority attitude and intervention into the young couples' married life. This is the very heart of generational conflicts between mothers-in-law and daughters-in-laws in modern

Korea."[15] Mothers-in-law try to control their son's family without any sense of sin

whereas their daughters-in-law suppress accumulated pent-up hate and aggression. F

said:

> My mother-in-law attempted to dominate our lives. When I married, she
> forced me to throw away my lifestyle, attitude, and activities being familiar
> with me. Whenever she interfered with my marriage life and urged me to
> follow what she asked me to do, I was very upset at this strange family and
> social system. Don't you think that this ridiculous system or relationship
> should be eliminated?

After I listened to her (F), I asked her how she reacted to the extraneous

intervention of her mother-in-law to her family life. She responded, "Her obsessive

intervention can stifle and destroy our happy marriage. If I confront her, the conflict

would be escalated. There is no solution to the conflict. I really feel helpless to set things

right. Nonetheless, I am a mother, wife, and daughter-in-law so being good to her rather

than challenging her is to please God and comply with God's creation order." The

accumulated frustration by mothers-in-law might be seen as a kind of *han* and may keep

oppressing Korean women that are then pitted against their daughters-in-laws, escalating

their suffering. As F shared her experience, daughters-in-law are now disgraced not just

by the men in the family but also by an older woman in the family who has power over

her because of age and her status as the mother of her husband through the hierarchical

line of power. In some sense, the source of the enmity between the both women is the

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[15] Youna Kim, *Women, Television and Everyday Life in Korea: Journeys of Hope* (London:
Routledge, 2005), 94.

patriarchal system or men-centered power that pits them against one another and makes them helpless victims in their family.[16]

K complained about familial or social structure that gives her unacceptable pain and frustration, responding that her being patience is to make God pleased rather than trying to correct something that might be related to her gendered relations. K and F did accept their reality or their situation as God's will rather than doing something to bring about healthy transformation. In that sense, women in this culture tend to view their suffering as their destiny, even though such reality promotes the stereotype on women or daughters-in-law and perpetuates their pain and development of a negative sense of self. Later, I will discuss how the women in my study do not confront or challenge what dominates their life and harms sense of self.

Self-Underrepresentation

As repeatedly aforementioned, fathers have been the authoritative head and the main decision-maker of the family whereas women the periphery, inferior, and subordinate beings to men in patriarchal structures. I also described how the fathers as decision makers and breadwinners affected their fates of daughters, especially the women in my study. I asked them to articulate what happened to them when they had to decide the path to higher education. C recalled what her father exhorted when she had to decide the path to her higher education: "my father wanted me to be an elementary school teacher or nurse, or public servant when I was young, saying the women with such occupations become the most sought-after for marriage in Korea." Her story shows why teaching is feminized or women make up a large proportion of the teaching ranks in

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[16] Kim, *Women, Television and Everyday Life in Korea,* 94

schools. The feminization of elementary teachers is one of the biggest problems in Korean elementary schools. According to Miseop Song, female teachers in elementary and middle schools make up 62. 7% and 54.1% as of 1999, and this unbalanced ratio between male teachers and female counterparts is increasing, causing many educational and social problems.[17] Women seem to be far less restricted or have options of marrying or remaining single, but women are still confined to such private areas as childcare and household duties. The feminization of teaching jobs or roles in Korean context can reflect the mindset of people in which women's duty is to raise children so female teachers are preferred to take on as substitute mothers while children, are in school and away from the home.[18] Thus, such careers as nurses and public servants are viewed as women's work.

I asked them, "What images or stuff exactly describe who they are?" They picked up some stuff or images that they think might represent them. They said that they looked like 'flowers, driver, cook, maid, puppet or helpless doll.' Sadly, C described herself as a wind-doll on the street that moves its arms up and down at the sports of the wind. The images or symbols that they portrayed about themselves suggest that the women think of themselves as passive, dependent, self-sacrificing, over-controlled providers. They were questioned to illustrate how they expect their daughters to live their lives. Undoubtedly, the women desired their daughters to live in a better place or better situation where they are able to become decision-makers for their life; they may not want to be asked to choose only one between their marriage and their career; they do not want to be

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[17] Mi Sop Song, "Feminization of Teach Professions or 교직의 여성화, 어디까지 왔나?," 교육 발전연구 16(2000): 103.

[18] Ibid., 111.

discriminated against in their career because they are woman. In a word, all the women I

talked to argued that to let their daughters know about the gendered world and the

practices coming from patriarchal power is their responsibility. These women wanted to

equip them to have a wonderful job that enables them to live in a way different from what

they have lived. As a part of an effort to empower their daughters to live as an

independent and subjective being, the women who are the mothers in my study tried their

best to give daughters education as much as sons, because they saw education for girls as

important resources and key to achieve their dreams and desire. As an educated Korean

Christian woman, I agree with them in that education can be a means to raise women's

consciousness and discern the gendered reality. When I asked them to tell me more about

how they are able to help when education also is polluted with gendered practices, some

of the women proposed that they suggest schools provide feminist classes to students.

However, I was curious to know how the women who have never challenged the

androcentric power can take part in negotiating with schools that are unwilling to put

feminist class or education in their curriculum or to foster self-agency of their daughters.

When I asked them to elaborate what the biggest regret in their life was, E

expressed: "I got two bachelor degrees and wanted to work at broadcasting companies

but I gave up my dream shortly after my marriage. I regretted giving up my goal very

quickly like that. If I could turn back time, I will do what I dream for." Many of them

regretted failing to achieve what they wanted to do in their lives, and confessed they have

not exerted their subjectivity that empowers them to live their own full life rather than

life imposed by others. Their telling stories and my experience prove that we barely got

inspired or challenged to reclaim our self-agency and impose ourselves as an independent subject.

AnSaRam in Korean, or Inside Person

In Korea, husbands are generally called *nampyeon; bakkat yanban* (the man outside); *gueee* (that dear person) while wives *chip-saram* (house person);or *ansaram or anae*(inside person); "so-and-so' mother, or so-and-so's wife, or otherwise, after the name of the resident house."[19] Koreans have used calling their spouses like these for a long time so that nobody might feel anything problematic except for feminists who realize that language or words might restrict women's life. I also asked them, 'how did you feel when someone you someone's mother or wife?" Most of the women in my study did not recognize any problem from such titles as *jip-saram* (house person), or *ansaram or anae* (inside person) or someone's mother or wife except for the two women. Only **C** and **H** asked them to name their own name or the official title of her job if they meet with persons who attempted to call them as their sons' mothers or as their husbands' wives.

H said:

> I felt bad for those who called me as my son's mother. Their calling me my son's mother is an attempt to confine my work to house and ignore my professional work. Therefore, I politely say again "please call me **H** (her name) or newscaster **H**."

B said:

> My life is important so that I have made all efforts of how I can be happy. Unless I am happy, my husband and children are unhappy. That is one of many reasons that I want to retain and be called my own name. Korean women keep their own

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[19] El-Hannah Kim, "The Social Reality of Korean American Women:Toward Crashing with the Confucian Ideology," in *Korean American Women from Tradition to Modern Feminism,* eds. Young I. Song and Ailee Moon (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1998), 26.

name after marriage but I don't think that it refers to Korean women's self-agency or independence in their life considering women's are not decision-makers for many things and are discriminated.

Many Koreans do not recognize how these titles are related to women's life but the titles toward women such as *chip-saram* (house person);or *ansaram or anae* (inside person); "so-and-so' mother, or so-and-so's wife, or otherwise, after the name of the resident house still influence women's role, work, and subjectivity in that those words function as a primary tools to be used to confine women to private sectors, slim down their freedom, and instill the negative self-understanding in Korean context.

When they were asked to tell their experience that hindered them from holding their career, the women in my research shared the same experience in respect to the use of their maternity leave. **D** shared her experience:

> When I submitted the maternity leave application form to my boss two weeks before the expected date of birth, I was advised to resign.
> I felt bad for it and I refused the company's suggestion because I did not want to put my name on the list of the women who could not help resigning because of my kids. When my kids heard about my story, they might be disappointed in me, right?

As matter of fact, working mothers cannot help quitting their work unless they find family members who can care for their children during working hours. While sharing the stories regarding the newly elected first female president, I asked them to detail what they wished the newly elected first female president to completely deal with and tackle for Korean women among the national issues. They unanimously brought up the childcare issue that they thought is a drag on working mothers' self-realization as well as their contribution to society in a variety of different ways. Childcare is a major concern and a modern dilemma to make it harder to reconcile motherhood and their self-

realization or contribution to society for working mothers in Korean society. Lack of adequate child care assistance or system leads working mothers to face "a choice of either a family life or a career life, most Korean women are forced to prioritize the former" and Korean society to lose out on the contribution that such mothers can make w[20]

The concept or spirit of the woman inside and the man outside seem to justify the mindset that women's work is confined to private areas such as housework and childcare so women's career is not important as much as men's, driving people to think that childcare is still personal or family-dependent duty rather public work that government and all people must be responsible. Women, especially working women, go through a backbreaking effort to find anyone or family who can take care of their children while they are at the office. In the mindset of people that women tend to have prime responsibility for childcare though they have their professional careers, it is hard to anticipate them to have children or more children.

As a result, Korea is paying the price of failing to take care of this childcare. The fertility rate has fallen to the lowest level in the developed world. For example, this country had a birth rate of 1.2 children per woman in 2010. This phenomenon can have a damaging impact on productivity and economic stability because Korea is quickly turning into an aged society. The low birth rate is linked to a strong cultural emphasis on education and educational cost. The current cost of raising children continues to drive the low-birth-rate so theses days. Korean people joke: children are too expensive.[21] What else

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[20] Kim, *Women, Television and Everyday Life in Korea*, 141.

[21] Michael Seth, *Education Fever Society, Politics,and the Pursuit of Schooling in South Korea* (Honolulu:University Hawaii Press, 2002), 1-9 and 164.

do they have to do when they have to keep their jobs to financially support their

children's education and take care of childcare and bulk of housework? C said:

> I have to cook, clean house, and wash dishes immediately after coming
> home. In the meantime, my husband lies down, watching television,
> grabbing some snack until I am ready to dinner. After dinner, I wash my
> kids and put them to sleep. I am physically and psychologically exhausted
> from long days at work and house chores. I feel skeptical about combining
> work and motherhood. Above all, even though I work hard, the
> opportunity to promotion is not given as much as men. Everyday, I ask to
> myself, 'what are you doing? How much longer I can do this, seriously?'

Studies confirm that working mothers feel the stresses from house chores and

childcare significantly more than working fathers:

> Mothers do substantially more than fathers. In the past thirty years, men have
> taken on a greater role in these areas, and women have reduced their hours at
> home somewhat as they have taken on a greater role in the labor market. But in
> the absolute terms, mothers still do the bulk of childcare and household work.
> Wives spend about three times as much time doing housework as their husbands,
> do, and the pattern persists across ethnic groups and family structures.[22]

This reality makes working mothers who long to achieve self-realization and

simultaneously to keep motherhood might get caught in the super mom syndrome that

"has led them to over-extend themselves in trying to it all-a successful career, marital

harmony, well-adjusted children, caring for the elderly parents, and an active social life.

Many women have burned out in the proves, with some turning to alcohol or drugs."[23]

The unfavorable condition of working mothers might cause such physical and

psychological problems as the loss of self-esteem *hwabyung* (See chapter 2) in Korean, or

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[22] Anne Alstott, *No Exit: What Parents Owe Their Children and What Society Owes Parents* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 28.

[23] Kaisa Kauppinene and Tarita Tuomola, "Wormen, Health, and Alcohol-related Harm," in *Promoting Health for Working Women*, eds. Athena Linos and Wilhelm Kirch (New York: Springer, 2008), 298.

depression, exhaustion, and stress related illness. Prominently, working mothers cannot exist simultaneously in the both top ranks of the professional world and the world of motherhood.

As a resolution, one can encourage fathers to take a more active role in the lives of their children and spend more time with the family and house work. Their time can not only be a solution to reduce the roles of their wives who have to juggle their career and motherhood, but also a way to contribute to building a sound society and family. Many studies already prove that fathers' involvement plays a critical role in their child's cognitive and emotional development. Furthermore, I, the woman who I talked suggested, "We have to realize that all people and society should be responsible for childcare. And, government and society have to pay attention to how they present childcare arrangement and various strategies to shift the current situation where women or working mothers have to take care of children and housework. Otherwise, women will not have one more child any more."

What else made women frustrated in their work? As C stressed how she felt frustrated in relation to maternity leave, the women in my study revealed that gender discrimination was very permeated over at their workplaces so that they were placed at disadvantage through the promotion systems and work position.

> By comparison with the male colleague that started working at the company at the same time, I had to wait longer to get promoted, having seen that women were excluded from some higher positions though they had same ability and practical know-how as men. As I said before, I was subjected to pressure of quitting my jobs when I tried to take maternity leave or time off before and after giving birth. (D said.)

> When I worked at a research institute, female colleagues including me did not expect to get promoted because they knew that leadership positions were allowed

to men who have a well-organized network to support each other through building men's solidarity and sharing information.
(I told.)

For the gender pay gap that mirrors inequalities in a society, Korea has one of the

lowest women's workforce participation rates and the highest wage gap with the

problems of a disproportionate number of irregular workers among the member countries

of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Even though

women do the same work as men, they receive 30-40 percent less wages. As of 2005,

"the wages gap between women and men employed in the 50 largest companies in South

Korea in fact more than 50% during the past five years."[24]

Still Grand Narrative: The Ideology of the Wise Mother and Good Wife

There is the concept *Hyeonmo-yangcho* or literally a wise mother and good wife

that is used as much more unfriendly to the reference of working mothers within the

confines of a nuclear family and capitalist system. Some scholars attempt to develop this

the century-old gender ideology from feminist perspectives but this notion still is used as

an attempt to confine women to private sectors and negatively affect women's reworking

their self. I asked them to share with me what marriage means to them. F said:

> For women, marriage means to accept to be a wife and mother. In that sense, these roles as a wife and mother are one of the most import things in my life that I cannot resist. The problem is that our society does not get mature enough to accept women's heart to become a wise mother and good wife and does not provide social equipment to protect women's sacrifice. Instead, men and our society use this good custom as an ideology to discriminate against women, creating unequal social structure or perpetuating stereotype for women."

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[24] Seunsook Moon, "Women and Civil Society in South Korea," in *Korean Society: Civil Society, Democracy, and the State* ed. Charles K. Armstrong (London: Routledge, 2002), 144.

In fact, the term 'wise mother and good wife' that **F** mentioned, keeps being changed and reinterpreted according the time, but it still contains the images and roles of a woman who sacrifices herself to her family business, confining them to private areas, and placing them at the lower end of the patriarchal family structure.

K is a mother of three children and 20 years younger than her husband. She is a Christian active in congregation and exceptionally devotes to her husband and children. **K** said:

> I feel sorry to my daughter and sons. My dream and every day's prayer go to my children. They are my life. I am afraid of thinking how I can survive if they leave home when they grow up. They are all that I have and they are my life. Hahaha!

As the case of **K**, many women in Korean context think themselves in the close relationship to their children or to others so women suffer an identity crisis when their children children won't need their mothers any more. It is called 'empty nest syndrome' used to refer to the post-parental psychological and emotional complex that occurs to parents, especially mothers, when children move out of the home. This is common in middle-aged women and especially mothers who "have been most devoted to their children suffer most intensely from the empty nest syndrome. They often become extremely depressed because they fell unloved, unwanted and as if there were no meaning left in their lives."[25]

I asked, "if we need to keep the real worth of this word, a good mother and wise mother, how would you think the meaning of the terms would be changed in light of women's subjectivity and self-agency? **H** said:

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[25] Trish Green, *Motherhood, Absence and Transition: When Adult Children Leave Home* (Farnham, England: Ashgate, 2010), 11.

I think that women need to change the old concept of the term of 'wise mother and good wife'. They need to be proud to find themselves in their own career and to be useful to the community. A woman or mother is not a property belonging to a man or father or her children. A mother is a person who lives with them or lives together not an assistant or a helper who does everything for them. Hence, mothers have to think that their life will influence their daughter's formation of identity and the understanding of their son about women.

In line with the notion of 'wise mother and good wife', Korean mothers have been identified as the manager of their children's education, or their new and enlarging role of mothering in Korean contemporary society who meticulously collects information and make careful decisions about their children's education and future. In a word, it is good for women or mothers to expand themselves to know what happen to outside their private world and to be a facilitator who teaches their children, especially their daughters to live their own life getting along with others. That is H's suggestion.

However, So Jin Park discusses the role and notion of "manager mothers" that mirrors the maternal educational project "with the long-standing emphasis on maternal responsibility for children's education" and "the consuming practices of mothers for children's education, on the assumption that everybody can (or should) be manager mothers."[26] A's husband went back to Korea to teach at a university after earning his PhD here in American but A decided to stay with her children who wanted to keep studying at American schools. She said; "I was on the phone to get some information useful in relation to good colleges that have good reputations for her children. I do everything from driving, cooking, and cleaning. I do not ask my children to do anything. I just ask them to have to go study." As A did, Korean mothers as the 'manager moms' are willing to

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[26] So Jin Park, "Educational Manager Mothers as Neoliberal Maternal Subjects," in *New Millennium South Korea*, 110–11.

become the primary instrument of their children's academic success and to accept their

roles as a family strategy to promote children's academic attainment.[27]

Diakonia -Centered Religious Activities

I wanted to know what kinds of religious activities the women in my study have

participated in, what kinds of stories about the preaching they hear, Biblical texts and

Bible study, and how they think of God in respect with self-agency, and what kind of

prayers they have done when they go to church. Surprisingly, none of the women in my

research holds a leadership position in their congregations although their educational

backgrounds, experience, devotion and loyalty to their church prove that they deserve to

hold or fulfill real leadership or decision-making positions for their communities of faith.

I asked them to tell, "What kinds of religious activities do in their church." **B** said:

> I just go to church to listen to God's words. I don't think that there is respect for
> women. What women are asked to do for their church is such service as cooking,
> fundraising, cleaning. I am a lifetime Christian but I have not been given a
> leadership position in my congregations. It is irony for my husband who is not an
> active member to get a leadership position instead of me. I participate in choir,
> reception, and cooking. When I started working at church kitchen, I complained a
> lot. As a working mother, my house is out of control. I am stressed out. I do 90%
> of the housework so I need to do this arrangement during weekend. I also wanted
> to take some rest but I had to prepare food for church meal Saturday. However,
> looking at the women that have cooked for church members over thirty years, I
> couldn't complain any more. Five years have passed since I got involved in
> cooking at church. I seem insensitive to what happen to churchwomen.

I asked her, "how her getting involved in cooking for church members was related

to her self-confidence, individual self-fulfillment or self-development." She replied that

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[27] Yoonhee Hang, "Transnational Motherhood in the Making of Global Kids:South Korean
Educational Migrants in Singapore," in *Living Intersections: Transnational Migrant Identifications in
Asia,* Caroline Pluss and Chan Kwok-bun (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 153-55.

such activities did not bring any positive and productive development to her but it is

meaningful to help other women who have been committed to this service for a long time.

The context and experience that the women in my study got through were not different

from those of **B**.

To develop models of the church, theologians often use certain terms from the

Greek New Testament. On the basis of Acts 2:42, there is strong evidence that the nature

of the church revolves around five basic purposes or functions: *kerygram* (proclamation),

koinoia (fellowship), *leitourgia* (worship), *diakonia* (service), *didache* (education). These

five "address-modes," or modes of communication are inter-connected and necessary for

the church to fulfill its mission of mediating and practicing the message of love,

forgiveness, reconciliation, emancipation, and grace.[28] These five functions based on the

basic elements of the church life must be interconnected and interdependent. Nonetheless,

the women in congregations are invited to get involved in the only function of *diakonia*,

or service among five functions of church. In this context, how can we say that women

engage in creatively, systematically, and holistically religious activities that also lead to

their self-development and reclaim their self-agency though they serve God and

communities of faith with their heart? **C** confirmed what roles and activities were given

to churchwomen:

> Worship brings me healing and comfort so I go to church. As other women in church do, I also get involved in fundraising and cooking. My talent? I don't think that church members or ministers know what kind of talents I have. Hahahah! Um, I am a good cook so they encourage me to cook whenever special events were held. I cannot say that church members treat women badly, but I do not feel that I am respected in church setting. In spite of that, working for church would please

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[28] Robert W. Pazmiño, *God Our Teacher: Theological Basics in Christian Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001), 114-17.

God, right? Therefore, I try to enjoy doing service though my work for church is similar to the work at home.

Most women that I interviewed went through the same experience. Religious activates in which they engage amount to the work similar to that in their house. Some of them are committed to teaching, singing, fundraising fund to take care of the sick and poor among their members, doing their church chores. Importantly, just as in the home, women in the church are called wise mothers and good wives and *chip-saram* (house person); or *ansaram or anae* (inside person); "so-and-so' mother, or so-and-so's wife.

Lack of Diversity

Korean Protestant churches "hold worship services very often such as Sunday morning, afternoon, evening, Wednesday, Saturday, early morning and overnight worship service, district worship service, cell service, birthday worship service, marriage worship service, funeral worship service and so forth." [29] There are a variety of opinions concerning the phenomenon that Korean churches hold too many worship services and religious activities. This is not a major theme in this study, but the various spiritual messages and practices that the women listen to or learn through many worship services and religious activities matter to this work. I asked them to tell me who their favorite Biblical figures are and why they like them. To make the list of the Biblical figures whom they named: Paul, Joseph, Virgin Mary, Ruth, Naomi, Job, the paralyzed man, Esther, Rahab, Abraham, Jacob, Mary and Martha. F said that she picked up Joseph in the Hebrew Bible: "Joseph did not lose faith in God and hope though he got through emotional and psychological hardship and times of spiritual dryness or darkness. Thus,

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[29] Sung Hae Kim, *Development of Praise Education Training Program* (DMin diss., Oral Robert University, 2008), 5.

the story about him gives me strength and comfort." In the meantime, G said that she

liked David because he gave her a lot of strength and courage to challenge her hardships.

As seen from the list, the knowledge regarding Biblical figures is very limited and

selected. In respect to female figures, what they were aware of was very superficial. For

example, the female figure who inspired **A** was Esther in that she saved her country by

taking significant risk and making major contributions to Israelites as a queen mother.

The knowledge about female characters in the Bible or Biblical stories have been

gained from sermons, Biblical studies, and other channels such as Christian mass media,

and books. The contents that they received are very limited and their questions about

biblical characters are not discussed or answered. When I asked them to know who

Jephthah's daughter or (Judges 11) and Dinah (Genesis 34) are how they are remembered,

the women in this dissertation said that they rarely listen to preaching in relation to all

women – Dina, Jephtha's daughter etc. Even though their pastors spoke about female

characters, their focus go to unconditional submission and devotion to their congregation

rather than based on feminist theological perspectives. **I**, who was aware of the story of

Jephthah's daughter posed questions:

> I have not heard about this story a lot but when I learned about it, I was curious to
> know what the point of this text was. Did God really want to receive a young girl
> as sacrifice? For Isaac, Abraham was about to kill him, a merciful anger
> intervened and a ram was appeared to save his only son in God's mercy. Why not
> Jephthah's daughter? Why should not God intervene when she was sacrificed?

J also wondered, "Why almost the female characters in the Bible were poor,

lower class, ignorant, handicapped or diseased, and abandoned. Whenever I heard about

the stories regarding the female figures, I felt empathy on them but on the other hand, I

felt bad for their situation and hardships although they were loved." As **J** said, church

members or women have not given chances to learn the following from their so many

Bible studies and sermons. In a word, they did not hear that men were the writers of the

Scripture and why the voices and existence of the marginalized including women at the

time couldn't help being unheard and invisible while the Scripture was canonized.

B was proud of her church because positively, her congregation invites the

theologians with the perspectives of liberation theology to speak or preach and gives

opportunity to gain discernment about what is going on outside the church. How many

Korean churches give their church members the chances to encounter liberation

theologians within their congregation? Texts of terror or terrible accounts regarding the

four abused women of the Bible, which Phyllis Trible argues must be presented and

discussed within the congregation to have better understanding of a God who is portrayed

as uncompassionate and callous God in the texts of terror, directly challenges the

misogyny of scriptural passages, and ridiculous situation that drives to disparage these

victims.[30]

Despite the fact that female Christians are the main audience that attend such

religious activities as worship services as well as prayers meetings in that females make

up 70% of Protestant Christians, their voice and stories are hardly reflected and

proclaimed. Where can they learn what the patriarchal culture looks like and how

women's voices in that system are ignored unless the stories regarding female figures in

the Bible who suffered from androcentric power are not remembered through their

religious activities?

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[30] Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 55–57 and 86.

In order to understand how Biblical stories, their faith in God, and worships are related to reclaiming self-agency of the women in the study, I asked the women in my study the following questions: Why do you go to church or attend so many worship services? Why does it matter to your life? What does God mean to you? What are metaphors or images describing God? I believe you have heard many times about the story of Martha and Mary (Luke 10:38-42). Did you find some questions and dilemmas in the story? How can you say if you are allowed to deal with the dilemmas and questions by using imagination and creativity?

I responded: "Why I go to church at least every Sunday is to learn how to be humble and reduce my greed. In particular, I am so happy when I sing hymns. Above all, I like the Kenosis that Jesus teaches us through his death."

When it comes with the reason that I goes to churches, she was interested in her personality based on faith rather than social context, though she was a student activist who was engaged in struggles for democratization in Korea. Thus, she posed a lot of questions in relation to sexism, racism, and social justice within society as well as communities of faith during the interview but in the end, she associated the concept of Kenosis or sacrifice of Jesus with her personal virtues or cultivation. Kenosis is a Greek word referring to 'emptying.' In relation to the concept of the Kenosis in patriarchal context, Rosemary Ruether articulates that "Jesus as the Christ, the representative of liberated humanity and the liberating Word of God, manifests and the kenosis of patriarchy, the announcement of the new humanity through a life style that discards

hierarchal caste privilege and speaks on behalf of the lowly."[31] She (I) is not alone to think that unconditional sacrifice pleases God. Unless women are equipped with critical reflection, it is hard to distinguish the notion of sacrifice by God and imposed sacrifice of patriarchal dominant power.

What kinds of images or metaphors do the women that I interviewed keep in their minds? When it comes with the images or metaphors of Jesus and God, there were concrete images of God that these women shared that reflected their lived experiences. J said:

> I(J) cannot live without God. God is the one who gives resilience and healing. When I pray, I feel like God gives me a hug. Jesus or God is seen as mildness or gentleness and love ..... I do not care about gender of God. It is not bothered for me to use the metaphor father for God.

I showed what the context of churches looks like:

> There are some scriptural texts that bug me. Those texts are proclaimed by male guest speakers at only women's committee meetings or women's conventions. For example, 'man was not created for woman, but the woman for the man(1 Cor. 11:9)... because he is the image and glory of God but the woman if the glory of the man because she came from the man. Thus the woman is under the power of her husband.' Then, many women there responded "amen." When I heard this kind of message, matter of fact, it was not touched because it was too intentional and discouraged. Wow! Churches are same to family as well as society in that the whole system is operated in andocentric structure where women are always subject to submission and subjugation. I want to belong to faith communities who are called to proclaim the message of love, dignity of human beings, equality. I really want to learn the core message that Jesus struggles to give us regardless of gender and class, etc. I do not think that church can do something to change society or their context filled with sexism or social problems. Thus, I am thinking of going back to Catholic that I ever attended during my college year. The church is as patriarchal or men-centered as family and society are.

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[31] Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk: Toward a Feminist Theology: With a New Introduction*, 10th anniversary ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993), 137.

God was described with images such as a healer, comforter, hug, forgiver, and love, counselor, and listeners to these women. God was understood as the one who gave healing, resilience, strength and made them humble and patient rather than power and impetus to change their world that gives wound, pain, and suffering to the women in my study. They have rarely had many chances to encounter God languages in their context, but many of them in my study recognized and welcome the female images of God. Then, I asked them if they have heard someone name God as Mother God, rather than Father God or used female metaphor in public meeting in churches. They did not remember that they heard God Mother in public areas. I further asked, "What kinds of prayers go to God who is felt like a hug, warm breathing, and love for their development?" A responded "I pray for their children and husband. I thank to God who gives me a lot of blessings such as good husband and laws-in. Thus, I ask God to be a more devoted person who pours my energy and time to work for church." I followed, "What kinds of contributions do you want to make?" She said that she wanted to spread Christianity and obey what church asked me to do, attending all kinds of worships. I did not find one among the women interviewed who said she asked God to be a subjective person or to live their full life while meditating God and participating in prayer meetings.

K told me:

My pastor does not preach the stories or themes in relation to women so I do not have any chance to find women's voice or self-agency in his preaching. However, I do not think that not speak about women's issues is a problem. For the language of God, addressing God as a father or one in male images does not bother me at all though my father had been verbally abusive and given me hard life when I grew up.

In the meantime, F confirmed, "church members and pastors are unlikely to see women in terms of leaderships or partnerships and discipleships that early churches had done. I think that churches are more conservative than society and get left behind so much in respect to women's issues. Is it time for communities of faith to keep pace with our society if it is too much to expect that they take lead in making our society different?"

In a word, Christian women in Korean communities of faith have not heard about the stories regarding the Biblical female figures with the feminist theological perspectives. Nonetheless, considering the images that they portrayed about God are based in the notion of female images, they understand God in the female metaphors and symbols. Herein, narrative pedagogy as Christian education can be a means to enable Christian women to discern the gendered context that they face and bring about feminist perspectives in relation to their subjectivity and emancipation given by Jesus Christ.

God is not a human being so God is neither male nor female who possess human characteristics or limitations, as many Christians or people understand. Thus, masculine nouns and pronouns for God have come under fire. Feminist theologians are unanimous that thinking God in male languages brings about gendered understanding of God, shaping the mind-set that "because God is husband-like, husbands are like god-like; God is father-like, fathers are god-like."[32] Despite the reason that one uses metaphorical language for God is that she or he cannot represent God with our literal language, too many Christians have never been comfortable with changing the traditional Christian ways of naming God, firmly believing that God is a man and therefore male is the head of

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[32] Rosemary Curran Barciauskas and Debra Beery Hull, *Loving and Working: Reweaving Women's Public and Private Lives* (Bloomington, IN: Meyer Stone Books, 1989), 95.

home, church, and society. The exclusive use of male languages or titles for God can be used as an instrument for exploitation of girls and women rather than address the gendered context. Proposing to use inclusive language for God can be a starting point to bring about gender inclusive transformation. When women in Korean church experience various scriptural messages and religious activities beyond the *Diakonia* or voluntary service centered activities, women would know who they are and get an opportunity of self-improvement and furthermore, find good relationship with God, communities of faith, others, and themselves.

I really wanted to know how Christian women challenge the gendered context and practice so that I kept asking while interviewing them. How they responded to and challenged the context or words that denigrate women and trivialize women's experience and life was varied. Most of them do not challenge or confront those things. Some of them never challenged the conventional and taking-for-granted context that belittles women. They needed to take courage to break their silence. However, their critiquing and questions were not welcome by the community. They were constantly referred to the words that they need to more be humble and sacrificial for God and churches. After the negative experience, they came to be silent observers verbatim.

The opinions regarding interfaith dialogue and conservative, heteronormative issues can be illuminated in light of the lack of diversity in the Christian world. The women in this study have scarcely been exposed to such issues. It means, if they are interested in addressing diversity in the Christian community or society, they might personally study or find a way to get some understanding of the nuances of these issues. Some of them in the study avoided answers about the questions regarding interfaith

dialogue and homosexuality. Others showed open and tolerant mind-set about these topics in terms of human rights and reconciliation rather than religious perspectives. J, one of the others who showed an extremely cold attitude toward other religions and homosexuality, stating "that Jesus is the only way, the truth, and the life so no other religion offers in the infinite payment of sin that only Jesus Christ could provide; scripture defines homosexuality as a sin." In the meantime, E who is an active member in a non-denominational church, whose minister is open-minded toward interfaith and a conservative, heteronormative issue said that she heard from her pastor that Christians may not insist that their religion is the only genuine religion and may not criticize people with sexual orientation different from ours because all of us including them are creation of God. In this sense, it is important to note Christian women's perspectives depend on their leaders, or so-called senior pastors who are in charge of teachings their church members via preaching and Bible studies.

In respect to how Korean churches have understood interfaith and conservative, heteronormative issues, here is an example that reflects the reality of some church members. Korean churches have been especially aligned with conservatives. The world' largest congress of Christian churches was held in *Busan*, Korea on Oct. 30 under the themes "Pilgrimage to *Busan*: An Ecumenical Journey into World Christianity." "Hosting the WCC in Korea has brought about some dissension among churches her, a group of 71 conservative churches that bring about some dissention planned to protest in front of the event venue, claiming that WCC has been tainted by pluralism embracing different gods,

communism, homosexuality, and other lifestyles that are condemned in the Bible."[33]

Many conservative churches think that religious pluralism or interfaith dialogues violates

the authority of the Bible, and aims at destroying Christianity. They are unwilling to

accept WCC as an appropriate organization regarding churches. The conflict between the

radical or liberal circles and conservative counterparts is not something that started just

recently and not limited to one area. The problem is that the jealousies and animosities

have greatly intensified between the two without mutual dialogue and negotiation,

blocking even the possibility to discuss women's issues. If they are disciples of Jesus

Christ, they need to engage in attempts to bring about inclusion, equal rights, and justice.

How can they imagine the complexity and diversity of others if Korean women

can't even imagine their own liberation and complex, multiplicity of their self? In a

Korean Christian woman's narrative, there are multiple selves that make up the whole

self, and these issues are especially important in their narratives.

Addictive Way of Self-Giving

This section can be said somewhat to sum up what the women in my study have

experienced in family, society, and communities of faith. Kelly Chong asserts the

particular ideology of structure of Confucian patriarchy, with its strong emphasis on

domesticity and ongoing ties between mothers and children drive Korean women into

complex domestic situations prone to self-giving or sacrifice for their husbands, and

especially their children.[34] The concept of sacrifice taught by the Confucian teachings

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[33] Ji-sook Bae, "World's Largest Christian Congress to Make Asian Debut in Busan," *The Korea Herald,* October 24, 2013, accessed March 15, 2014, http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?ud=20131024000802.

[34] Chong, *Deliverance and Submission,* 75.

holds on to Korean culture as a blanket in conflict with the Christian new concept,

women's emancipation found in Christ that gives women opportunities to think them of

subjective and independent subject as a creation of God.

The woman (F) in my research was exposed to a complex domestic context of the

traditional mother-in-law and daughter-in-law conflict. Her mother-in-law exercises a big

influence and power on her current life, bringing about serious frustration and pain. This

conflict of mothers-in-law and daughters-in-law is also related to patriarchal power in

that "the authority of mothers-in-law, laden with the typical attitude of son-superiority,

exercises a profound influence on the lives of daughters-in-law,"[35] hence their control

over their daughters-in-law functions as a mechanism to urge their mothers-in-law to be

subject to their sons.

A said she agrees with the person who prays in public that "thank God for your

saving us inferior, dirtier, and useless than dust and worms" and is proud of her who has

done voluntary work for her communities of faith. Even B who is aware well of feminist

theological perspectives views her cooking for church members as women's work to

please God. D as well as H expressed their ideals to their pastors that they wanted to get

involved in planning committee rather than cooking and other religious service but their

wishes were not welcome. Because they have had several similar experiences, they gave

up their expressing opinions or seeking religious activities that would exercise their talent

or gift. Even E did not take offense when she was asked to cook and fundraise money for

her church. Surely, all of the women in my study regard self-giving and sacrifice as

women's nature or their fate with the memories, in which they have been discouraged to

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[35] Kim, *Women, Television and Everyday Life in Korea,* 93–94.

raise their voices and have never gained satisfactory or positive results when they challenged stereotypes for women.

As many feminists point out, teaching and practices taught by congregation act as reinforcing the concept of the self-giving and sacrifice with the patriarchal structure. Jesus' command is to continue to love each other with true Christian love (John 13:34-5). In general, Christians are used to agape (a Greek term) that is one of the four types of love in the Bible. They all can be translated in English as love, but historically they have had quite different meanings. In general, the term agape has been referred to self-sacrificial love grounded in the grace of God, without expecting anything in return for the self. The problem is that patriarchal culture is fused with self-sacrificial love that Christianity emphasizes in terms of power dynamics. This marriage resulted in succumbing to the other members' points of view and consequently ignoring their own needs rather than building the healthy relationship between the strong and weak or the power and the powerless. Consequently, the concept of self-sacrifice can be used as a tool to emotionally control one another, frequently employed on the weak members as duty or obligation, especially women and children.[36]

Scarily, love in which self-sacrifice is central can be easily misused to avoid conflict or troubles in family as well as congregations. Don Browning proposes the notion of love based in equality, mutual sense of respect and service as an alternative to one-sided self-sacrifice corresponding to self-denial. His point is that true love refers to

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[36] Brita L. Gill-Austern, "Love Understood as Self-Sacrifice and Self-Denial," in Moessner, *Through the Eyes of Women*, 309-15.

self-giving or sacrifice emerging from a mutual sense of respect and service that provides

one another the safe space to act on their own developing choices, and garner vitality,

dignity, and living power in the horizontal relationships among the concerned parties,

rather than one sided self-sacrifice resulted in self-denial.[37] The woman (H) in my

research emphasized mothers must be authentically reborn as a wise mother and good

wife, refusing the image of the mother who unconditionally is ready to make sacrifice for

their children:

> We mothers should be good mothers and wise wives and thus shift the ideology to
> control women and confine women to private areas into the paradigm where
> working mothers or mothers teach their children how to live together, contribute
> to make this world better, and say no to their husbands and society that ask for
> one-sided sacrifice and be superwomen. Then, we are happy and my family is
> happy, and finally our congregation as well as our society will be happy.

As H stated, to be really good mothers and wise wives, what they should examine

is whether their sacrificial love is based in the mutual love and respect that Don proposes

among their family members, congregations, and others, or one-sided sacrifice emerging

from power dynamics.

Negotiation Between Personal Freedom in Christ and Gendered Practices

When it comes with women's self-agency, how the teachings of faith

communities and their religious activities in congregation have contributed to enhancing

women's self-improvement or dialogical self will be explored.

Translating Their Experience into Narratives

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[37] Don S. Browning, *Marriage and Modernization: How Globalization Threatens Marriage and What to Do about It* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2003), 46.

Women in my study listened to biblical stories and messages by participating in religious activities and engaging in worships, Bible studies, and prayer meetings several times a week. Thus, narrative and storytelling are so much a part of Christian practices to form, change, maintain, and challenge the faith and life of community and discover who God is and know how God is encountered and works in human history.

I wanted to know how their perspectives and experience are translate into stories so I asked them to articulate their thoughts about the story of Martha and Mary. My question was whether 'they empathize with Martha or Mary.'

Most of women in my study agreed how frustrated Martha was in this story. C said "we have been embedded that Mary received favors and praise from Jesus by just sitting around and listening to him, feeling bad for Martha. Martha is a mirror of Korean women. Whenever I read this story, I feel guilty and stupid." I posed another question, then "do you have any suggestions or variations that make sense to readers, especially female readers by using imaginative creativity?" She(C) responded, "This is my idea. They can cater food enough to feed Jesus and their guests. The, Martha and Mary may sit around and listen to him. Then, Martha no needs to complain to Jesus that she is overwhelmed and no needs to get criticism from Jesus. Hahaha!"

H expressed that "I wish Martha did not complain what she has done. If she made up her mind to feed them, she may not complain. If she feels bad, she has to talk to others that I cannot do that." Thus, I asked her, "Do you have any idea that satisfies Martha as well as Mary?" She answered, "Martha and Mary complete cooking and cleaning their house together before Jesus comes their home. Martha's criticism towards Mary does not just come from the current scene that Mary sits around Jesus but Mary's long laziness

and irresponsibility to take care of family members." J said, "I really empathize with both women. Especially Mary, how she was ill at ease while her sister cooked while doing back and forth. Women are not allowed to that in this context. However, it is Mary that is given praises. Anyway, this story is confusing and sometimes hurt, worsening my low self-esteem." While interviewing the women, I did not see questions strongly showing their opinions as much as the story of Martha and Mary. At first, they were upset at the negative comparison between Martha who worked hard to prepare a meal for the guests and her sister Mary who enjoyed their Bible study, when their stomachs started rumbling. The women did not provide a solution to deal with the dilemma that honors the both and analyze this story in terms of feminist logics and their self-agency, but they were not reluctant to share their experience as a Korean woman living in a patriarchal society.

The woman I in my research said, "I really feel the absence of female voices, of women's thoughts and stories in text when I read the Bible or listen to preaching. I don't think that what I read and learned in religious activities contributed to understanding who I am as a woman. Furthermore, even when I want to dig up what I do not know, I have none to answer my questions." Their voices were not much reflected in congregations; their religious activities did not lead into their self-development; their voluntary work was not different from their housework. In spite of that, the emerging feminist culture didn't address and embrace Christian women's soul in their congregation, so they still feel marginalized in their communities of faith, and gendered practices and words discourage women's spiritual development as self-reliant and resourceful being. Impressively, Korean Christian women have never gave up translating their experience into sacred narrative with their quiet voice by participating in ritual and worships and

personal prayers, and are influencing generations yet to come though they have asked to

remain silent. Herein, stories can be a means to empower them to remember their past,

find meaning, reflect present experience critically, and search the vision for the future

when religious educators with feminist theological lens use stories or narratives to work

with Christian women.

The women, especially the woman J in my study, who struggles with economic,

physical, and psychological hardships, said that

> I have to take care of my three daughters, keep cooking, and making money
> because my husband is a student. I should be a super mom to weather all kinds of
> problems. As a matter of fact, I am not a super woman so I am burnt out.
> Whenever I cannot stand my harsh reality or deal with all kinds of things, I cry
> out before God. God is mother, friend, and healer to me. God is not the one who
> controls or oppresses me, but one who sustains my life. Therefore, I hear the
> father God's voice and feel God's power to heal, give energy, and renew me that
> when I pray or attend church. I might die already without God who empowers me
> to take care of all kinds of complex hardships.

Although the women in my study grew up listening to many ideologies that

domesticate their dependence and underrepresentation, it is not hard to notice that

faithing resulting from religious activities was predominantly their way to tell their

stories and navigating their world and others. Namely, people say women are very

talkative but their talking stories or experience is their way to life and believe in God in

that it contributed to constructing a rich, personal, and life-giving meaning and location,

bringing together diverse voices and network through their own ways. Their being

talkative is a way to navigate their world and others and to shape life experience into

narrative forms, and find pattern of meaning and response open to them, maintain the

relational, emotional, and spiritual well being. Besides, faith is the process and pace in

which they are reframing life events especially with personal hardships as well as

gendered practices into stories of resilience and discernment, finding personal agency,

faithfulness, and responsibility of many selves or 'many-I's' as motherhood, working

women and church member.

Although women in my study have been not given chances to speak in the public

section, they have never gave up searching for the spirit moving through the interior

space. They have experienced the exclusion from the leadership or decision-making

position but their life and faith are characterized by inclusivity to those on the margin,

resiliently believing that difference does not mean superiority or inferiority.

Ownership of Their Story

Before starting interviewing the women, I talked to them that "you are the bearer

of the image of God so your stories and experience are sacred and invaluable. Above all,

there are no right answers in our conversation when you answer to my questions.

Nobody knows you better than you know yourself." That is the reason that I wanted to

remind that telling their life experience or their own story is to give them ownership of

their stories.

When I met with them, I felt how nervous they were. After completing the

interview, I could tell that they felt lighter than before the interview. Ten women of the

women cried while they shared their autobiographical stories.

The woman(I) cried bitterly remembering her sister who died of stomach cancer

was not happy in her marriage:

> My sister was my heroin. She was an excellent student to the degree that
> she had a full ride to one of the prestigious medical schools in Korea. However,
> my father extremely opposed her enrolling in the school saying that his son might
> be dispirited if his daughter made too much academic success. Therefore, she
> chose a nursing school, instead of the prestigious medical college. Even after
> graduation, she could not give up her dream so that she went to Germany to

become a medical doctor. After coming back with the degree of medical doctor, she married to a man, a third-generation only son. His mother had been hard on her daughter-in-law, my sister. My sister died of stomach cancer seven years after her marriage. (I also cried while listening to her. She did not keep her stories for a while so that I silently waited until she calmed down.) Looking at my sister, I did not want to live as she did. I married to a man whose mother also tried to meddle in our marriage life. Her interference was one of many reasons that we moved to America. My mother-in-law passed away several years ago but I came to think of her in terms of women's life in patriarchal world rather than personal conflict with her.

By telling and retelling a story that belongs to them, women realized that nobody can take away their story and how valuable and even sacred of their past experience even though their experiences were bitter and painful. Women can find a way that enables them to be a decision-maker in their life regardless of whether to accept or reject any culturally biased precepts, when they recognize their ownership of their own stories. The logic behind the prejudice said that Korean women are not interested in politics or are reluctant to run for political office in Korean cultures. When I asked the women in my research to their political perspective regarding the election of the first female president, they clearly expressed that the first female president's election was not related to the promotion of the social status of Korean women. Instead, her appearance indicated the success of the conservatives who think economics precedes politics or culture.

One cannot say that Korean Christian women have dangerous memories of resistance and transformation in relation to their self-agency. However, as Welch states, Korean Christian women's dangerous memories of conflict, oppression, and exclusion can bring about accountability and thus, resistance and transformation to their gendered context and their understanding of their self[38] when they encounter the stories to

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[38] Welch, *A Feminist Ethic of Risk*, 139.

challenge patriarchal dominant grasp and tell and retell their own stories through empowerment of narrative religious pedagogy.

As I cried bitterly while sharing the stories regarding her sister's life, women step into the healing process by pouring out their harsh memories and painful stories. Considering telling stories is empowering and sacred work,[39] Korean Christian women have not stopped telling and living by their faith stories that are rooted in the close relationships with God and congregations despite their suffering or *han*. Thus, narrative religious pedagogy can act as a critical feminist theological praxis that seeks to "retrieve for gotten or neglected women in history and to explore new resources for spirituality in the present"[40] when Korean Christian women do not give up finding the real meaning of deliverance and listening to the voice of emancipation by Christ.

Unless they were interviewed, they would have never had the chance to think of others who might have different sexual orientation and different religions. The women in my study could recognized their past stories are deserved to be remembers and envision their future by participating in the interview in relation to their self-agency and stories based on their experience and the wisdom of their own individually and communally. As Chung Hyun Kyung asserts, the stories empowers Korean Christian women to "move away from our imposed fear of losing Christianity" and pay attention to what is going on

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[39] Rogers, *Finding God in the Giraffiti*, 112-13.

[40] "Praxis as the Nature of Christianity," in Russell and Clarkson, *Dictionary of Feminist Theologies*, 222.

outside churches and practice the concepts in terms of tolerance and inclusiveness, and

asking what makes Christianity Christian to Christian churches and also themselves.[41]

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[41] Chung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again*, 139.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has explored that narrative pedagogy adopted for Korean Christian women active in Korean Protestant churches could be effective in empowering their voices and self-agency in ways that are consistent with piercing feminist theological lens and thus could bring gender-inclusive transformation to their understanding of their self and their communities of faith.

It has especially focused on demonstrating how one can say that Korean Christian women have not reclaimed their self-agency. In detail, the followings have been offered as the criteria that Korean Christian women have not enjoyed their independence and free will: they were not decision-makers in their life; they were excluded from leadership positions in their congregations; and last but not least, Korean Christian women did not have dangerous memories of oppression and suffering, rather than dangerous memories to resist patriarchy's dominating grasp in Korean culture.

The function and potential of narratives to provide women with pedagogy for empowerment have been reflected upon in this dissertation. One has shown how transmitting a faith tradition, building the personal, spiritual, and theological self, creating a liminal space that might result in bringing about emancipation and power to change their current oppressive reality, and offering therapeutic, healing, and catharsis with imaginative vitality to women. Finally, this study has examined how narrative pedagogy has played a pivotal role in fostering Korean Christian women to critique reality of patriarchy's dominating power, and empowering them to rework their self and rewrite their self-narratives or stories that guide them to form the narrative self or

autonomous self who brings gender positive transformation to themselves as well as their congregations.

The finding gained from interviews of Korean Christian women partly affirmed the literature reviews that Korean Christian women haven't had dangerous memories of confrontation and resistance against the patriarchal power and they live in the patriarchal context. Korean Christian women were familiar with the sense of the limitation, subordination, and frustration resulting from an androcentric culture. Conversely, the outcomes of research indicated that they experienced their newfound personal freedom by engaging in religious activities. They testified that though their involvement in congregations somehow did not offer increased self-confidence, self-fulfillment, and opportunities for learning and self-development but at least led the to the liminal space of the intersection between deliverance by Christ and submission by patriarchal dominance over women. Consequently, Korea Christian women live out the paradoxes or both places – empowerment from their adherence to religious or congregational activities and submission passed down by patriarchal culture.

There is a long way to go until they say that religious patriarchy has ended in their congregations. In that sense, this paradox serves as a means to roll female Christians into the track of emancipation and deliverance where there is neither male nor female, neither slave nor free (Gal. 3:28). Religious education in focusing on stories or narratives empowers Korean Christian women to rewrite their stories based on the narrative or dialogical self who speaks and challenges the taken-for-granted concepts that have acted to prevent women's self-development and indoctrinated that gender equality can be an obstacle to the growth of congregations.

There might be many dissertations that are dealt with the subjects of Christian women's spiritual and theological development or narrative pedagogy of women. However, this study is significant in that it included the findings gained from eleven autobiographical narrative interviews in very inductive and reflective way. The dissertation illuminated how narrative pedagogy makes contributions to bringing about the spiritual and theological development of Christian women with their subjectivity or self-agency. It reaffirmed that Korean Christian females did not have dangerous stories of resistance against gender discrimination and religious activities maintained and reinforced the stereotypes for women, and at the same time articulated what Korean female Christians live by the parallel or paradoxes between deliverance given by Jesus Christ and subjugation or silence imposed by religious patriarchy. It gives Christian religious educators an opportunity to envision gender-inclusive community filled with the stories of justice, equality, healing, and hope. The dissertation found that high levels of education and economic growth did not counteract patriarchal power and gendered practices. Finally, it released the women's experiences in Protestant churches married with patriarchal context. Nonetheless, what women still account for the majority of Christian population in Korean society is a good sigh. Thus, Christian religious educators and leaders need to pay attention to how Christian religious education makes contributions to shifting the stories of submission from the gendered context and the ideology of one-sided self-sacrifice into the energy to rework their self and tell dangerous stories of resistance and emancipation.

This study is primarily limited to capturing Korean Christian women's stories in regard to their experiences. The women in this study were characterized by the following:

they were in their forties and graduates from college-level schools; they were married; they belonged to middle and upper class; they have had little exposure to other religions although they have lived in a country full of multi-religious heritages. The homogeneity of research participants might be helpful for Christian religious educators and leaders who work with the women in congregations to pinpoint and unpack their specific needs, but might also serve as a limitation of this study. Nonetheless, in terms of diversity or as if the women with a greater age range, diverse religious, socio-economic, and educational backgrounds are recruited as research participants, the research might bring about rich finding that will help religious educations or church leaders have better understanding of those who they work with. Thus, I suggest that the next research will consider how religious message and practices in various religions in Korean society have something to do with women's emancipation and self-agency by expanding the research to the women in other religions. Then, one can gain not only diverse and rich research results through which one can fully illuminate how Christianity in Korean context has affected on women's emancipation and self-agency.

This study will be used to change women's addictive way of self-sacrifice into mutual sacrifice and care for each other, to let Christians be aware how women's stories enrich their congregations and bring about the relationships with God, their selves, congregations, and others in the world in a holistic and equal way rather than reducing the speed of their development. It will also let people or Korean congregations suggest that growth, "peace, and harmony can be no longer be maintained at the cost of women"[1]

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[1] Chung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again*, 27.

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Can you tell me about yourself?
- All schools that you attended (educational background)
- Your marital status (single or separated, divorced, widowed), having children, employment status, place to live, economic status, social class, etc.)
- How long have you been a Christian?
      (How do you become a Christian? What activities in the church, position in your congregation,)

2. About stories of their lived experience
- What were your earliest memories about your identity as a woman?
- How did you prepare to be a female adult?
- What have you grown listening to your parents, teachers, and church leaders about your gender, future, and talents, etc?
- What were your favorite and memorable events?
- What were peak experiences like?
- What were circumstances in real low moments and how did you overcome those?
- What do you think are your gifts and talents, and what are you doing with your gifts or talents?
- What are your longings? What your longs can you teach about God and yourself?
- What were desires and hopes?
- What were and are your fears?
- What were and are key relationships?
- What were conflicts, issues and problems?
- Who were your heroes/heroines? How did these heroes or heroines influence your life and future?
- Can you tell about your experiences in relation to self-agency, subjectivity, autonomy, or independence? What experiences did promote your consciousness of your self-agency or independence?
- What stories encouraged or discouraged you in the past?
- How different is your current life from what you most cherished? Unless your dream failed, why did you fail to come true your dream?

3. Spiritual and theological understandings and perspectives
- Have you heard about the term patriarchy? Where or from whom did you hear?
- What images or symbols to represent God do you know or use?
      (Where and how do you learn such images?) What do you think of these symbols and images of God?
- Whenever church leaders pray before the congregation, they say that Oh, omnipotent God, thank you for letting your only son, Jesus Christ come into this world full of sins and evils to save the worthless, wormlike us? Is that okay to you? Why? Otherwise, why is not it okay?

- Many women in Korean society are described and remembered simply as someone's mother or someone's wife. How about your case? Is it ok? Why? Is not it ok? Why? Do you call the name of your married friend or call just their children's or husband's?
- You retain your family name after marriage while Western women who assume their husband's name after marriage. What do you think about this practice? Does it mean that the Koran women's own identity is respected rather than Western women?
- How do you feel about feminism? What is your impression of feminism?
- How do you think about the pattern-women inside home and men outside home? Why not women outside home? Some men gave up their employment and replaced housework seen as women's work while their wife have full time jobs? How do you think of this change or those men who stay home to do housework?
- How different or similar is responsibilities and roles in the life of the church from those of your family life?
- How had you prepared to be a female adult? You cannot really make your daughter into something. What would you like to make your daughter as she grows up and why? Do you help your daughter raise up their self-respect and dignity as a woman?
- Korea came to have the first female president? How do you think of this happening to Korea where chauvinists say 'how dare women?" How would it be if your church hires female clergy as a senior pastor? How do you think that having a female president affects to women's social status? Who is your role model in your life?
- How do you think about interfaith attempts or pluralism, diversity of religious?
- After talking or storytelling, how did you feel?
- From you experience, or from imagination, do you feel women clergy approach or do ministry differently on the average than clergymen?
- Who is your favorite Bible character and why?

4. Retell or rewrite their story

The stories of Mary and Martha and the bent-over woman would be repeatedly told several times a year within Korean congregation.

I ask subjects to read the two biblical stories loud and talk about it.
(Martha and Mary story)

- How often has this story been heard?
- Can you retell the story in your words?
- What do you think about this story of Mary and Martha?
- Was there something that is familiar with you?
- What is ok or not ok with you?
- Where does your story begin?
- How did you get into that situation?
- Who told you about this story?
- What could you see/hear in this story?
- How do you cope with something that you cannot understand?
- How did it affect you?

- Who do you want to have empathy between Martha and Mary?
- What made you choose the one?
- Why did you want to do that?
- What do you want to happen?
- When do you decide that?
- Do you have images or symbols that come to your mind after reading this story?
- Do you put you in mind of something?
- Could you draw me a picture of that in words?
- What part makes you uncomfortable or comfortable?

5. What do you mean that you speak your stories and let others hear your voices in your family, workplace, and churches? What your experience told you about f narrative or storytelling?(power, potential, function)

6. Please write a letter to God that is the focus on your questions, feelings or emotion, longings or desires or suggestions regarding your self-agency and authorship.

APPENDIX 2 : CONSENT/ASSENT FORM

To: Interview Participant

From: (Dissertation student name here)

Subject: Informed Consent to Participate in Study

Date: _____

Dear: _____

My name is (researcher name here), and I am a PhD student at Claremont School of Theology. I am researching how a narrative religious pedagogy can empower Korean Christian women active in Korean congregations in Korea as well as in the United States of America to reclaim their self-agency.

This research will add to the body of knowledge about this dissertation and could potentially assist with a greater awareness to understand Korean Christian females and their needs in the future.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this research interview. Your participation is voluntary. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. If at any time you do not want to continue with the interview, you may decline. Your time and involvement is profoundly appreciated. The entire interview will take approximately one and a half to two hours. To maintain the essence of your words for the research, I will record the information. At any time you may request to see or hear the information I collect. You may end your participation in this study at any time. Maintaining your anonymity is a priority and every practical precaution will be taken to disguise your identity. There will not be any identifying information on audiotapes or transcripts of these workshops. I will hold the names of participants, recordings, and transcriptions in a password safe online account until the completion and defense of my dissertation.

The interview will be tape-recorded and the researcher will take notes. This is done for data analysis. All individual identification will be removed from the hard copy

of the transcript. Participant identity and confidentiality will be concealed using coding procedures. Data will be ultimately disposed after a period of one year.

Excerpts from the interview may be included in the final dissertation report or other later publications. However, under no circumstances will your name or identifying characteristics appear and be released in these writings.

I would be grateful if you would sign this form on the line provided below to show that you have read and agree with the contents. Please return it to me at (my email goes here). An electronic signature also is acceptable.

_____

Your electronic signature above

(If you have problems with the research interview, please call me at 000-000-0000.)

This study is being conducted in part to fulfill requirements for my Organization Development PhD (my degree title goes here) degree in the Organization and Development and Change program (your program name goes here) at the graduate school of Claremont School of Theology in Claremont, California.

The proposal of this study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Claremont School of Theology. The Chair of Claremont School of Theology's Institutional Review Board is Dr. OOO OO. He can be reached at (000) 000 – 0000 and his email address is (the chairperson email address goes here). The chairperson of this dissertation is Dr. OOO OOO(my advisor name goes here). He can be reached at (000) 000-0000 for further questions or concerns about the project/research.

Sincerely,
Dissertation student name here
Claremont School of Theology

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